

T H E
MISTAKES OF THE HEART:
O R,
M E M O I R S
O F
LADY CAROLINA PELHAM
A N D
LADY VICTORIA NEVIL.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

PUBLISHED BY
M. TREYSSAC DE VERGY,
Counsellor in the Parliaments of Paris and Bourdeaux.

At feeling hearts I fling, nor ever miss the game.

PRIOR.

V O L. I.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. MURDOCH in the STRAND.

M DCC LXIX.



DEDICATION.

TO M. J. J. ROUSSEAU, Citizen of
GENEVA.

HAD I chosen to dedicate my novel to a man of rank, hundreds had I easily found weak enough to thank me for praises, the more welcome the less they are deserved: but their's had been the honour, mine the disgrace. I was too proud to mistake. I looked for a man whose esteem should be my glory. You are the man my ambition pointed out to me—the man whose virtues, talents and delicacy,

DEDICATION.

licacy, called aloud for my public
homage. Deign, Sir, to accept it
as the tribute of my respect and
admiration.

THE AUTHOR.

London, March 1769.

THE
EDITOR

TO THE
PUBLIC.

THE real merit of these memoirs, not my regard for their author, has induced me to publish them.

Friendship shall never bias my judgment, when I may forfeit the public esteem by obeying her calls.

*I wish the author had been as chaste in some of his pictures, as he has been delicate in his sentiments, happy in his conversations,
skilled*

THE EDITOR

skilled in the human heart : but was he wrong to follow nature, to write what he felt, to represent mankind as they are?—I cannot, will not, say he was.

I have read this novel, sometimes with the cool eye of a critic, sometimes with the inflamed soul of a lover. Reason now and then objected, but passion was ever pleased.

What shall I say of the sprightliness of Carolina—of the ingenuity of Victoria—of the wanderings of Lady Belmour and Sir John Modish?—What shall I say!—Ye critics, silence!—They have pleased me. Every impartial bel-esprit, every feeling heart, will eccho—"they have pleased me."

*There were several letters of Lord Pelham—but so unmercifully virtuous, they would have yawned the fair and the gay into as sound a
nap*

TO THE PUBLIC.

nap as the Journals of Pamela Andrews to her Dear Father and Mother. I have likewise curtailed the correspondence of my favourite Victoria—was I right? I know not.

If faults against language occur—wonder there are so few—the author is a foreigner.

* * * * *

La critique est aisée, et l'art est difficile.

TREYSSAC DE VERGY.

The two last Volumes are ready for the
Press.



The two last Volumes are ready for the

Press.

A Book without a preface, like a fine woman in a modest dress, will hardly please in this age of refinement. Wit and beauty the slaves of fashion! ridiculous! Give me a girl of eighteen, graced with her own charms; give me a Clarissa, and my heart and my eyes will feel and enjoy. What need have I of fictitious ornaments?—to heighten my desires? Pshaw! Talk not of art when youth and curiosity pant but for nature.

I have a copy of the Venus of Medicis, says one to me.—Have you? Let me see it—and I hurry him to his closet. He stops in the first room, and attempts a description—a description!—A preface and the graces of the toilet are just that description—damn them all.

THE AUTHOR.



M E M O I R S
O F
Lady CAROLINA PELHAM,
A N D
Lady VICTORIA NEVIL.



LETTER I.

Lady VICTORIA NEVIL to Lady
CAROLINA PELHAM.

HERE has been a meteor, Carolina;
a meteor which shone so bright, and
radiant, that our eyes were almost dazzled
with it. It came from London, and stop-
ped for a fortnight in Cumberland: its
motions were so quick and rapid, that it
B seemed

seemed in twenty places at once. Very likely, what was so new, and so peculiarly striking to us, is quite familiar to you: London furnishes more than one of these phenomena; and Sir JOHN MODISH is not the only man who has exchanged nature for art, and sense for wit. —How we looked and stared at the embroidered fluttering beau! —How people crowded about him when he appeared in public! —Neither Lord B**e, nor the illustrious Orator P***, nor even the spirited W***es, have ever attracted the attention of the fools of England in so eminent a degree. —These are not such unparalleled oddities in politics, as Sir JOHN is really in civil society. —We were, I believe, the first who were favoured with a sight of the delicate, elegant, and cheerful creature. He waited on us at Brenton-hall, and complimented me with a

courtly



courtly bow, and a conscious air of his dear self-importance. His tongue was so ready for flattery, and his lips for smiling approbation, that I durst hardly venture a word, or steal a look at him. He begged the favour of my hand at our next ball at Carlisle; but assuring him, it was engaged to Mr. FROSBY, he, on a sudden, hummed a tune — danced his disappointment away—and took his leave.—To have Sir John for a partner! Could any thing be more inviting, more glorious, more *à propos* to raise the vanity of a country girl! — Why did I keep my word, and refuse the high honour Sir JOHN deigned to confer upon me? Since I have disregarded this uncommon opportunity, I am afraid I shall ever be the thoughtless VICTORIA, who knows not how to ridicule modesty in a man's behaviour, and esteem and commend foppery and impertinence.

'Tis

'Tis very lucky, CAROLINA, I am at such a distance from London, where, indulged in my unfashionable prejudices, I am at liberty to detest vice and folly, without the fear of satire and contempt. Let not a soul know of my existence: let me live only for my CAROLINA and FROSBY. Adieu.

Benton-hall, Feb. 7, 1762.

LETTER

LETTER II.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady
VICTORIA NEVIL.

HOW came you, dear VICTORIA, not to be most agreeably entertained with Sir JOHN's lively conversation, and prefer to him the modest, and plain Mr. FROSBY? Have you neither vanity, nor self-love? Is not my VICTORIA ashamed to glory in a virtuous lover, when in opposition to a courtier, so highly celebrated for his taste and brilliancy of wit? You dare openly to declare, that decency and morals are the only amiable and essential qualities in a man, when the whole world rise in defence of gallantry, intrigue, and perfidy! — How Lady PRESTON, and Lady COQUET will exclaim against such a novelty!

novelty! How they will sneer when I shall whisper them that Sir JOHN is not to be praised for being young, handsome, rich—and the very pink of cockcombs! — I am at a loss, VICTORIA, how to justify such an extraordinary proceeding. What can I say? — Come—let me see.—I could—No: it won't do—This will do better—better! How! — I'll so rack my brains — Have we no instance of a *petit-maitre* left off for—for what? — The character is so old, — or so new, — that there is hardly an expression to — O! I'll find it out. — Yes, yes, I have it; for a *man of sense*. Is not this a pretty word, VICTORIA? — How frightful would be the sound of it in a polite *drum*! — How exquisitely odious to a fashionable lady! — Well, have we no such instance to produce in your ladyship's favour? — Where shall I look for it? — At court? — In the city? —

By-lavon.

Where

Where *shall* I look for it, VICTORIA? —
 Had you really this particular way of
 thinking, loving, and behaving, — how
 jealous I should be! The delightful thing,
 to be spoken of in the drawing-room, and
 at every *roué*, as a yet unseen piece of na-
 ture! — to fix upon one's self every eye and
 every tongue! — Oh! let the manner be
 ever so out of the way, it must be above
 the expectations of the proudest heart. —
 Who could resist the temptation, when
 attended with so much glory! — But — but
 — How many buts against the thirsty soul
 panting after fame and distinction! — Had
 you wisdom, talents, and beauty, united
 to the most refined, enchanting degree —
 Were you unrivalled for grace and wit —
 Could you with a word, or a smile, force
 all men to your feet, and throw them into
 raptures — even then, VICTORIA, you
 should be the object of malice and discon-
 tent —

tent—Even then, you should be railed at by your most sanguine admirers.

'Tis not in our borrowed existence to applaud virtues we are deprived of: far from being inclined to acknowledge a superiority, which humbles our pride, we are always ready to represent it in an odious and despicable light. Slander, VICTORIA, is a weapon trusted in our hands, by fashion and pleasure, to oppose the bold spirits that presume to lead us into the solitary paths of honour and decency. The reason of a few individuals has been, is, and ever shall be, drowned amidst the clamours of the multitude. The general cry being for the folly in fashion, whoever disregards it, is treated as a common enemy, and dangerous innovator.

How

at How happy is a private station in life!—
 How happy that position in which we are
 free from the lash of mode and criticism!
 —What do I say! Is there any happiness
 where it is not felt? Is there any poi-
 gnancy of taste, when obstacles inter-
 fere not between passions and the object
 we eagerly seek after? — To be compelled
 to wander over bushes and thorns, before
 we shelter in the bewitching arbour of peace
 and voluptuousness! — Killing thought,
 VICTORIA! — Adieu! adieu! Continue
 to love FROSBY—to laugh at fashion—and
 believe me yours forever.

The London, February, 176.

CAROLINA.

How B 5 LETTER

LETTER III.

MUST I be eternally tormented by
 Lord CHARLES FANFLY — that
 Lord CHARLES, VICTORIA, who is the
 most steadily tedious, and provoking
 man upon earth! No change, though ever
 so trifling, appears in his understanding
 and to-morrow he will do me the favour
 of the same impertinent conversation, with
 which he has daily vexed me to death
 ever since I have been acquainted with
 his cringing, unthinking lordship. This
 the man whom my father ordered me to
 love, and to respect, tho' my reason tells
 me he deserves to be hated, and despised.

Was I of a coquettish disposition, the
 man would do well enough for a husband
 of whom, no more is now required than
 titles, riches, and indifference: but as

inter

intend to have one who will chat, fret,
and rave in a lively strain, and whom
I can prattle into fondness; I want a more
witty companion to wait upon me to the
temple of Hymen. I don't mean, dear
VICTORIA, to be passionately in love,
and to turn mad upon my husband's
smiles: no! no! I do not pretend to that
supreme bliss; a lower rank in the ter-
restrial happiness will satisfy my ambi-
tion.

I have always observed, dear Vic-
TORIA, that nothing tempts a lady more
into society, than the having no amusements
at home; that want is the principal cause
of the many false steps, passions, and lit-
tlenesses which distract, and ruin a fami-
ly. What can one do with a fool, who
will neither divert, nor be diverted; who
will (without mercy) tell you over, and
over

over again, the childish tales he has learnt from his nurse, or from his even less rational governor; who will be continually speaking about horses, dogs, and his follies at Newmarket and White's?—Is not our head vapourishly affected by the unwelcome repetition; and are not we justly enticed to order the coach, and gallop away to a friend for pleasure and comfort.

My father loved me to excess! and he could be so unjust as to command I should marry the son of his intimate friend Lord FANFLY, or forfeit thirty thousand pounds, which he left to my brother, in case I opposed his will!—— He did not surely intend I should be the wretchedest of women.—Could a father——No! no! it would be a crime to obey, when my submission would plunge

me into the deepest misery. — He thought I should love, and that Lord FANFLY deserved to enter into his family, otherwise he would not have entailed upon his daughter the horrors, and vexations attending a forced, and detested engagement. — I'll never be Lady FANFLY. — What have I not to hope from the tenderest of mothers, and from a brother who has so high a friendship for me? — I would hate, next to deformity, to blush for a man who should have been my choice, to the everlasting dishonour of my taste and delicacy. — Poor CHARLES! He loves me so heartily! — Then he looks so! — Were his soul as sublime, and his tongue as eloquent as his eyes are expressive! — Adieu.

London, Feb. 176-.

LETTER;

LETTER IV.

WAS I a man, dear VICTORIA, I would kneel, kiss your hands, and tell you devoutly, I adore you: — I would kneel, kiss, and adore again, and again. — What a charming creature! How sincere how ingenuous! — What man deserves so much innocence and virtue! — Does the happy FROSBY, who made you sing his praises; who first taught you to love, and to express it, know all the value of your charms, and the sensibility of your heart? — Can he see, and hear you, without the utmost complacency, and delight? Is he not lost in the contemplation of so much excellence? and are not his eyes the seat of love, and enchanting confusion? — How awful is the presence of beauty! — What troubles does it not cause in a lover

LETTER

bre

breast when indifferent, — what raptures
when pleased !

As often as I consider the many loving
thoughts, which a retirement in the coun-
try inspires us with, as often do I feel a
half regret to have been three whole years
drudging at St. James's, for the mere am-
bition of attracting applause, regards and
admiration.

Had I never been out of Pelham-hall, I
should have had my FROSBY, my birds, my
bed of tulips, and my parrot.—What be-
witching amusements ! FROSBY would have
told me fine things, and taught them to
the parrot, that I might be constant-
ly entertained with love and flattery.
How handsome ! how witty ! how grace-
ful !"—would have attended every visit,
and, perhaps, every period——And then,

FROSBY

FROSBY the next day — and always FROSBY —
 ----at dinner, in the garden, at cards, —
 to be sure I should have been perpetually
 fighting when alone, and smiling, and en-
 charmed when with him : — charming life !
 But as the conversation of a young lady,
 out of a fashionable circle, is generally li-
 mited within a very narrow compass, I
 do not conceive how FROSBY, let him have
 ever so sprightly an imagination, could
 have helped betraying me at last into
 a perfect indifference, if not a total dis-
 like.

I have always taken a disgust to my most
 favourite tunes when play'd three times over —
 — Why should it not be the same with
 respect to the melodious words, “ I love
 you, nobody walks, talks, dances, sings
 and does any thing so sweetly, and ravishes
 ingly as you” ? — Is my heart better dis-
 posed

posed for sentiment than my ear for harmony?—How could I ascertain the superiority of an HANDEL, and a FROSBY, if neither a PINCINI, nor a Lord FANFLY ever came in my way to enhance their valour, by the striking dissimilitude of their merit and talents?

When our heads are heated with a pleasing idea, we delight in deluding ourselves; and I am not surprised, dear VICARIA, that your heart should be so far deceived, since nobody has yet shewn you the prospect of a new, and more lively passion.—I could lay my life, that your heart rests at rest though you feel it in a flame.—How are you sure you love, having never an opportunity to hate?—Even from infancy, has not every one been anxious to please you? Had you ever a desire which was not applauded, and gratified?

With

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With

With tender parents, and indulgent friends, how could you be acquainted with pride, envy, jealousy, and the other foibles inseparable from society, and a worldly education?—Were Sir JOHN MODISH, and Mr FROSBY, in the drawing-room, and every distinction confined to the former — vanity, my sweet and modest VICTORIA would add a beautiful rose to your blooming cheeks, and enlighten you on the mistake of your heart. I do not say you would love Sir JOHN, but ten to one the slightest FROSBY would sink in your esteem.

We do not know ourselves till interest and passion force us to the enquiry. Led to a peaceful country life, by custom and habit, we love as we eat, sing, and walk; a partridge there, as well as a lover, can hardly create an unfelt sensation.——You will laugh at my incredulity, VICTORIA

ends and FROSBY shall be the better loved for
 any not thinking him so.—With all my
 infel heart: but—have a care not to put it in
 my power to recriminate. Adieu.

London, Feb. 1764

LETTER

LETTER V.

LADY COQUET and I went yesterday to the Green-Park, where we had not been ten minutes, before we met with Sir JOHN MODISH, in a riding dress.

“ He had just dismounted to have a glance at the Ladies, and was tired almost to annihilation.”

Have you had any news from Cumberland, Lady CAROLINA? How does the heavenly VICTORIA do?

She is very well, Sir JOHN.

And then, forgetting he was over-fatigued, he chatted with such velocity and fire, in praise of the beloved girl, that being afraid he should drop down

at our feet, Lady COQUET presented him with her salts. I could not help laughing, to hear Sir JOHN swear by his VICTORIA, that they could not con-
 more *à propos*, for his strength wonder-
 fully decayed whenever he spoke of the Beauty who had enslaved him. — He said it was a downright murder, that a young lady of your rank and merit should be buried in Cumberland, when she might be a toast in Town. He complained of Lord NEVIL, who sacrificed his most amiable daughter.

Sacrifice! Sir JOHN—Is not Mrs. BREN-
 DON's immense fortune a satisfactory com-
 pensation for Lady VICTORIA's attendance upon her aunt? —

Certainly it would be so, was not La-
 dy VICTORIA left entirely to the will, and
 disposal

disposal of Mrs. BRENTON: But pray, FR
 Lady CAROLINA, consider what a loss to the
 the court, if she ever — surely, FROSBY the m
 cannot be the man. ———

Why not? Is not Mr. FROSBY of La
 an illustrious family, and a man of charac-
 racter? ———

Of character! Of character, Lady CAROLINA! I b
 CAROLINA! A man who has no interest in the
 court, a man of character! A man whose name
 name is hardly mentioned twenty miles out of
 of his own manor, a man of character! Has it,
 he once posted to Newmarket, or taken a
 trip to France, and Italy? Who ever saw
 him at Almack's or Soho? And that man, I
 Lady CAROLINA! — that man, a man of
 character! — I commend an honest citizen
 who goes now and then to lavish his
 profits in the *beau monde* at Paris, but

pray, FROSBY, who never fashioned his
 of to othes, his table, his countenance, in
 FROSBY the modern taste, *sur mon bonheur, un tel*
homme est pitoïable. —

Y of Lady COQUET asked whether his
 chafal —

My rival, Lady COQUET! my ri-
 val! —

y CA I beg pardon, Sir JOHN—Do you be-
 rest ave Mr. FROSBY has already inspired Lady
 whole VICTORIA with a tender prepossession.—

es ou I am not yet determined what to think
 ! Ha it, Lady COQUET; for, tho' I have the
 ken oft exalted idea of Lady VICTORIA's
 er fanaticacy, I am sometimes forced into a
 e man of an intimacy between them. Lady
 an VICTORIA imbibed both her reason, and
 itizen elinations at Brenton-hall. The neigh-
 b his neighbourhood allowing FROSBY's visits, a
 s, but society was formed:—That love has in-
 truded

truded unawares on their hearts, under the name and sanction of friendship, what I suspect—and what I will not believe.—At the last ball at Carlisle, asked her hand; but, to my unspeakable chagrin, it had been promised. FROST was her partner; and, as I learnt, he always was so.—There is no concluding there was love in her choice.

Neither must you conclude there was none, said Lady COQUET, that is in the class of probabilities: besides, I imagine there was a necessity for Lady VICTORIA to dispose of her heart, to embellish the horrors of her wilderness. What would have become of her had she had no lover to trifle away with the many tedious hours that lay upon her hands? She had neither a Ranelagh, nor a Play-house:—Could she always read, meditate, walk, sing, and

pray

pray Her heart, surely, wanted as much
 diversion as her head ; and FROSBY being
 the only man, who sighed, courted, and
 flattered, who had incessant opportunities
 to amuse and to please, how should their
 attachment to each other be a prodigy?—

A very great one, Lady COQUET, one
 of the most marvellous kind. 'Tis the
 unconstrained familiarity of their vi-
 sits, which prompts me to think, that,
 unknown to themselves, they are cap-
 tivated by the delusions of sentiment,
 and subjected to the fascinations of fan-
 tasy.—Expressions of fondness, like smart
 repartee, may inchant by their novelty—
 but how quickly do their charms vanish
 when they are frequently repeated !

Were one of you, Ladies, and a fine
 gentleman, to break in upon Lady VIC-
 TORIA and Mr. FROSBY, they might pos-

bly, for a week or two, humour the deception, from habit or vanity ; but believe me, the first fortnight over, our lovers would necessarily awake to the ambition or pleasure of conquering a new heart.

Lady COQUET, insisting on his not loving you, since he was not jealous, he swore by the sacred name of Liberty, that he loved you more sincerely than PITT ever loved a peerage.

“ It is his *immense* respect for Lady VICTORIA, that hinders him from fearing a competitor like”—you may guess whom.

The man has such a fund of self-love!—he is really handsome, and truly elegant—but such a pride!—Were his heart as mischievous

chievous as it is bold, what would not my
VICTORIA have to dread !—That the same
 power which formed thee equally virtuous,
 sensible, and fair, may still protect thee,
 is the daily wish of thy **CAROLINA**. Adieu.

London, — 176—.

LETTER VI.

I Cannot conceive, dear VICTORIA, how it happens, but I am so pensive to-day, and so absent——Is it from the weather, my natural temper, or the conversation of my visitors, that my spirits are thus oppressed?——What *can* be the cause of my being so very different from myself?

The gay, the chearful CAROLINA, thoughtful, without knowing the “Why!” and the “How!” Lord Charles?——he did not speak.——Sir James?——he sung well.——The day is fine——I am well——what’s the matter with me then?

I went last night to the Suspicious Husband——there was, in the adjoining box——

What

What then ?—does my melancholy proceed from that box ?---Could a comely stranger, though ever so engaging, give me a moment's uneasiness ?---He looked--- he spoke--- was delicate--- artlessly graceful---How could all that take my gaiety away ?---If it is not that, what is it then ? Cannot you help me, dear VICTORIA ?---You, who are so used to sigh, and to love,---and to love and to tell, cannot you guess, whether there is any symptom of your rapturous sensibility in me ?

CAROLINA in love !----- With whom, pray ?--- With a man she never saw before, whom she may chance never to see again !---Incredible, incredible---I'll take my guitar and play that thought away.

Lady PRESTON, who accompanied me to the play, insisted, the whole night, that my eyes had been oftener upon that box, than upon the incomparable GARRICK---Foolish girl!--How weak we are, VICTORIA!--Who could imagine that our hearts should thus pant, and flutter at a first-sight!--GARRICK played Ranger, and I forgot he did!--Oh! my guitar, my guitar-----

My guitar is as much out of order as my head---My fingers and my voice have lost their wonted vivacity.

“Se non è amor, ch'è dunque quel ch'io sento?”

None of your laughs, sweet VICTORIA, none of your laughs: pity your CAROLINE

NA, and if you can tell her what ails her---
do it—do it immediately.

Tell me not of love---Of love did I
say?---Let not the bewitching sound reach
and please the ear of the indifferent, happy
CAROLINA.—Could it be in any man's
power---No: often as I have yielded to
the delusive calls of fancy, I could with-
stand reality---fight it, and conquer. Con-
quer!--how easily said!--how difficult to
be done!

I am afraid, VICTORIA, the conflict
would prove too hard for me. How often
have I not sighed in secret for a gown of
the newest taste, for a diamond of a
brighter water than my own, or for the
opening of a ball! Is not a man a more
tormenting trifle to a lady's brain, than a
piece of silk, a diamond, or the honour

of a first minuet?—Am I not mad to ask that question of the ingenuous VICTORIA, who never swerved from nature, or wished but for FROSBY?

Fashion has given an existence to so many temptations unknown to my VICTORIA——Oh! my heart, my heart!——
Adieu.

London — 176—

LETTER

L E T T E R VII.

HOW! FROSBY already uneasy! For what pray, dear VICTORIA? Had you not let him into the secrets of your heart, I should not be surprised at it: but he knows you love him, and he is uneasy!—he has hardly a rival, and he is fearful and suspicious! Had he an hundred, ought he to mistrust the sincerity of my VICTORIA?

Fear that VICTORIA may change!—Surely you are mistaken, you have had too many proofs of Mr. FROSBY's love and respect, not to doubt such a monstrous metamorphosis.

How could he love and not esteem you?—No, it is not in his power to have

a thought injurious to my VICTORIA: Once again, you are mistaken.

Mistaken!—You tell me, “he was two days absent from Brenton-hall”——

Two days!—And he loves you!—— That, “coming the third, he made no apology: and upon your obligingly enquiring after his health, by a sweet, How d’ye do? he fullenly answered, Very Well, and then fell a criticising the flowers you had just been drawing.

“At dinner, he did not once offer to help you — he found fault with the flavor of a hare you had ventured to commend—and even refused to sing.— Before and after tea, Mr. FROSBY was neither with you, nor with any body else, but kept constantly at the harpsicord—Only ten minutes

minutes before he took leave, he began to tell how the country would revive upon Sir JOHN MODISH's arrival——You then happening to smile, the gentleman made faces, and went away."

Well——all that, notwithstanding the mighty charge——yes——All that nothing at all——or something indeed.

What did the man mean? Let us lay our heads together, and we will guess it right——or wrong. Wrong would be more to the purpose; for in a situation like yours, truth is generally an impertinent intruder.

FROSBY, by his absence, intended either to enhance the pleasure of seeing you, or to know how he should be regreted.——

"Worse

“ Worfe and worfe, CAROLINA.—

Would you have him love some body else, or not be in his right senses?—

“ How cruel you are, CAROLINA !”

Some men are apt to realife what strikes their fancy : FROSBY, perhaps, has had a dream, in which he did not act the first part—who knows but Sir John was happier than he in that dream?—

“ The vexing Creature !—”

Well—Mr. FROSBY had a fit of pride—of folly— of — I know not what— Where can I find the idea of what is not? How can I suspect there is not a perpetual incense and adoration, when

Vic-

— VICTORIA is the deity?—I will not
believe——believe!——no: I will *not*
body believe——And I tell you again and
— again you are mistaken. Adieu.

London — 176 —

L E T T E R

L E T T E R VIII.

THE world may say what they please——They will never alter my opinion : it shall be as unchangeable as the eternal laws of Nature.

Is it not provoking, VICTORIA, that men should wantonly indulge themselves in every violation of their duty that they should even pride themselves in it, whilst the least frailty, the least omission in one of our sex, is cried down as an outrage to humanity, manners, and society ?

Are there two natures, two laws and can woman only offend, though

the weakest, and the most powerfully tempted?

If, in respect to religion, virtue and vice are equally rewarded and punished, why do we differ in our notions of honour and infamy? Is there any other good, any other evil, than what the laws of morality enjoin or prohibit? Can the same crime be, and not be?—If men are at liberty to be unjust and perfidious, whence that liberty?—Whence the judgment against us for imitating them?

If people will believe there is no religion, when priests live as if there was none, is it not to be feared, that justice and probity, shall be looked upon as precarious and absurd, when, far from being

L E T T E R VIII.

THE world may say what they please——They will never alter my opinion : it shall be as unchangeable as the eternal laws of Nature.

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being in esteem, they are ridiculed by the wisest part of mankind?

I do not intend, VICTORIA, to apologise for the foibles of my sex: Instances of depravity will never justify it in the heart of your CAROLINA; but let me pity the unfortunate women, whom an abused virtue, and too unguarded sensibility have brought to ruin and contempt, though from that ruin, and that contempt men draw both their fame and glory.

How ridiculous, how preposterous the opinion, that condemns in us those very actions, which it not only applauds in men but even sets in an honourable light! And we to support the dignity of rational beings, while they sport with it?—Is it upon us alone, that the safety and welfare of mankind

by the mankind depend? How stupidly unjust, insolent, and tyrannical!

I have been led to these reflections, by a scandalous report raised against Lady WYNDHAM: how well-founded it is, none can tell; however, every body sneers, censures, and defames.

Lady WYNDHAM has every quality to please, and make a man happy: but Lord WYNDHAM, after four months marriage, changing, on a sudden, his flattering behaviour into a mortifying indifference, she at length launched into society, and most likely was courted into a revenge.

Lady WYNDHAM has been seen twice in a landau, with Sir HENRY MULGRAVE, in Windfor-park——And from that circumstance

cumstance comes the mighty clamor against her reputation.—Lord WYNDHAM, to be sure, is not in the wrong, and has had no hand in the seeming misconduct of his lady: he acted as a gentleman: was he to be faithful to an amiable woman who was his wife? No, no, he is not to be blamed; and Lady WYNDHAM, is justly scandalised, for having youth, beauty, and a feeling heart.—Sir HENRY triumphs, and Lady WYNDHAM—I am really in a passion at hearing so many impertinences—What is equally stupid, and infinitely more insufferable, our ladies at court, who should defend the unhappy fair, are the most diligent promoters of her disgrace.—How can they forget they already are, or soon may be, in need of a greater indulgence themselves? But there must be
fools

fools every where, and upon every
stage—— I except Brenton-hall, where
lives my generous, sensible, VICTORIA.
Adieu.

London — 176—

LETTER

L E T T E R IX.

WH Y do I seek for retreat, when all
 the world pants after joy and diffi-
 pation? Why this throbbing heart?—
 Whence so many sighs?—Peace, Con-
 tent, amiable Indifference, ye faithful at-
 tendants of my former days, have you for-
 saken me?—Dismal thought!—
 Wretched CAROLINA!—An unusual
 emotion glows through my veins—
 think, and shudder—Can nothing afford
 relief to my dejected soul?—Where shall
 I look for comfort?—Music, books,
 society, have lost all their charms, all their
 illusion—Pleasure has fled from my
 looking-glass, from my toilet, from the
 language of my admirers—fled
 from whatever was a diversion, or a de-
 light to me.—Lady PRESTON!—

was you, who inticing me to the play——
No—you was the blind minister of fate——
It tempted you, led the way, and love
compleated my misery.

What troubles, what anxieties have I
not felt from that fatal day!——A stran-
ger——A man whose birth, manners,
fortune, are still unknown to me——And
my heart dares to throb at the dear re-
membrance——My mind to dwell upon
his graceful features——Oh! VICTO-
RIA! VICTORIA!——

Don't I complain sweetly?——Is not
my heart ravishingly torn by the impe-
rious and distracting passion? Was
VICTORIA ever so deeply affected as her
CAROLINA? Had she ever a raving mi-
nute?——Merciless FROSBY, who never
raised

raised your spirits, by real whims, or apparent inconstancy !

I hate the man, for not having made you display the over-ruling eloquence inherent to disappointment, jealousy, fury, and despair.—How pleasing to have seen you walk, and sit, and walk again——Fretful broken sighs—Lift your eyes to heaven and call for vengeance, or relief, in some noble, pathetic soliloquy !—How full of dignity, terror, tenderness, and sorrow each step, each look, each word, each tear !

Nature, VICTORIA, formed you in a charm under every shape ; how ungenerous then the lover who keeps you from the knowledge of your hidden charms !—How few men would deny themselves the pleasure of so many expressions of change

changes, and the yet more inviting temptation of raising storms in your loving breast, to enjoy a tear, and the extacy of a reconciliation!

Were I in love—Were I! 'Tis prettily said, indeed: Well, had I a lover, I would torment him to the utmost; I would search into the temper of the man—How could that be done without inspiring him with instantaneous, fierce, and contradictory passions?

The secure lover, ever degenerates into—a husband. How can his lady, living in a more brilliant, and indulgent society, help being followed if handsome, admired if witty, loved if tender, tempted if in her bloom? Must she dress unfashionably, move awkwardly, talk ridiculously, to please her sovereign lord, who begins

begins to be uneasy, fretful and perplexed? Must she cast her virtues away to whirl from folly to folly?—Had the man's temper appeared whilst a lover, a sensible lady would either have denied him her hand, or he would have reformed by the palpability of his absurdity and impertinence.

Marriage, dear VICTORIA, is so important a business—Is it not extravagant to treat it with carelessness, while we are so nice and attentive in the choice of an head-dress, the colour of a ribbon, or the make of a shoe?—I doubt whether reason is not an empty name—Whither am I running?—Lord, what a letter! Why does my VICTORIA desire her foolish CAROLINA to write? Lend her thy pen, or bid her be silent.—“Any thing upon nothing

and nothing upon any thing, rather
 than nothing at all."——Such were
 your commands——I obey: so forgive.
 Adieu.

London — 176 —

LETTER X.

Was very busy at my toilet this morn-
 ing practising a new smile, and impro-
 ving upon a courtly attitude, when Sir
 JOHN MODISH sent his name up. Un-
 willing to be helped in my deep study by
 great an adept, I ordered him to the
 Vol. I. D drawing

drawing room, where I presently went to receive him.

How ! hardly noon, and so fresh and blooming ! I swear, no woman can boast of so many native charms as Lady CAROLINA.

And the man was going to kiss my hand.

Have you so easily forgot Lady VICTORIA, Sir JOHN, the unrivaled VICTORIA ?

Would you have me for her sake be unjust to the accomplished CAROLINA ?—

I begged him to sit down.

When do you propose to set off for Cumberland ?—

In a few days, My Lady. I am come to take my leave and beseech your interest.--You cannot refuse it me,——

me, Dear Madam, would you refuse it
me ?

My interest!——Is there any need of
it when Sir JOHN MODISH is the lover?—
Only FROSBY in the way, and you call for
help!——

I will unbosom myself to you, Madam.
When I consider the character, the educa-
tion, the principles of Lady VICTORIA, I
do sincerely mistrust myself, and am all ap-
prehension—Be your amazement ever so
great, it really is so, and I do not
even blush for it——no, not even blush
for it.

I could affect every quality and every
virtue, Lady VICTORIA may esteem: I
could put on an air of reserve and candour,
but it would be a deceit, and I disdain it.
She must see me as I am, and there being
—Too little affinity between us, how can I
please? how can I be respected?——

The thought distracts me. Why am I
 carested in London, and neglected in Cum-
 berland?—Are our manners here so op-
 posite to good order as to frighten the
 artless offspring of nature?—But few
 women could entertain so extraordinary
 prejudice—Ought Lady VICTORIA to be
 one of them?—How hard this!—
 it not very hard, Madam?—

Lady VICTORIA, Sir JOHN, knows man-
 kind are, and must be, subject to man-
 foibles : she will as readily praise you for
 your virtues, as she will pity you for your
 errors.—

Amiable creature!—Would she but
 smile upon me!—To be reduced to
 the point of fearing FROSBY less than
 myself! How strange, and unaccount-
 able!—

Was there the least shadow of honour
 disguising my temper so as not to be su-
 pected

pected for Sir JOHN MODISH, I would attempt it—I would top my part to a miracle.—How many pretenders to virtue would not scruple to take advantage of her ingenuity, to gain her heart, that their whole life might be a perpetual scene of joy and happiness?—No—let me be ever so hated I will be like myself. If my love, my respect for the virtues of Lady VICTORIA cannot change me, no pretext whatever shall force me to wear a perfidious mask.—She shall never reproach me with the intention of betraying her into a mistake.—

Pity me, Lady CAROLINA; and if friendship can allow you to write to her of a man, though unworthy of her attention, may write—Let me beg the favour on my knee.—

Be pleased to keep your seat, Sir.—

Proud man ! How meek and humble !——

He had such an air of sincerity and concern, that I was really moved—— Words flow with such a grace from his lips——He spoke in such a noble and disinterested manner——What failings has he that most people of fashion have not ? With this difference, VICTORIA, that if folly could decently play on any one's features, he is almost the only man who could adorn it.

The seed of every virtue is in his soul, and his love for thee, will make it spring up. 'Tis by Lady VICTORIA, says my brother, with whom Sir JOHN is a great favourite, that he will be made conscious, he was not born merely to be a beau : to

her

her he will be indebted for the discovery of his hidden qualities.

LORD PELHAM, VICTORIA, is a judge of men : since he esteems Sir JOHN, notwithstanding his frivolity and dissipation, he must deserve his good opinion, and that opinion is an honour and a praise.——

He made me promise I would write : and the man, in the first transports of his gratitude, clasped me so eagerly in his arms——How could I avoid it?——A kiss was given——yes, a kiss.——Was I to thunder—to thunder for a kiss ! No, no, I wished him a good journey, and success——and success, VICTORIA !——He went away thanking me——thanking me !——Surely the man was half mad. Adieu.

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D 4

LET

LETTER XI.

Lady VICTORIA NEVIL to Lady
CAROLINA PELHAM.

WANTON CAROLINA! Darest thou thus profane the sacred language of love?—Beware, indiscreet girl, of the tender expression——Imitate not the flights of a passion whose name is terrible to the most intrepid——Suffer not thy heart to heave——Sigh not out a minute in the deceits of thy imagination.——Beware, CAROLINA, beware of the bewitching sensations ever inseparable from the thought of love——Quickly do they engage the soul with alluring and unrelenting raptures——Quickly do they warn it of its native desires : Once in that delirious seat of feelings and delusions, prudence struggles in vain——Indifference

rence dies away amid the fond temptations.

What heart will not run into wild extravagance when the head is possessed with a resistless passion!—Trifle not—
Cease to trifle, CAROLINA, with mighty Love, lest the spiteful deity force upon thee the reality of a mimicked flame.—Make not thyself the sport of a delusive fancy.—Still be thou ignorant of the wretched, restless hours that wait on hapless love—Dread to number the minutes of thy existence by never-dying troubles and anxieties.

Oh, CAROLINA! If even the certainty of being loved atones not for the smallest injustice in the lover : if that injustice is torture to an enamoured soul, to what height

of agony might not a hopeless passion carry
thy extreme sensibility !

A stranger !—— Fatal was the day
when thy eyes were struck with the lovely
youth !—— When thy ears listened to
his graceful accents ! When thy fond heart
by infectious sympathy led thee to gaze
and applaud !—— But—— thou loved
him not, CAROLINA.—— Though thy
mind is busied with his charms, thy soul is
yet unacquainted with sleepless nights, and
perplexing reveries—— Thou hast had but a
faint fit of love—— indulge it not with
reflection, or thou art undone—— for ever
undone.

Thou knowest not the treachery of
love—— Rouse not the innate wishes of thy
soul—— Lay not thyself at the mercy of
nature—— Forbear to think, to dream, to
talk

talk, to write of love——Stop thy straying fancy——Whither would it not wander?——

You tell me of Sir JOHN MODISH——
Can there be a more convincing proof you love not?——Of Sir JOHN!——Oh, CAROLINA! never tell me but of FROSBY.
Adieu.

Brenton-hall,-- 176——

D6

LET.

L E T T E R , XII.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady
VICTORIA NEVIL.

LADY PELHAM and I were just stepping out of the parlour for Soho, when a thundering rap announced a visit. My mother, having forgot she was not to be at home, Lord GEORGE PETERSTON was introduced.

Judge of my surprise, VICTORIA, when I beheld the lovely youth whose charming image, my heart had, in spite of prudence, so constantly retained. It was so unforeseen, so unexpected a *rencontre*, that my astonishment would have certainly appeared in an hundred shapes, had I not immediately called to my aid my fan, and my reason. Our eyes instantly met, and

his confusion, though carefully dissimulated, was not less visible than mine.

Since I came from my travels, said he to my mother, with a faltering accent, I have been so much in the country that it was not in my power to pay your Ladyship my respects sooner——But, ladies, you are going out——I will not have you stay a minute longer. Lady CAROLINA would not forgive me, was I to deprive her of her pleasures.——

Indeed, my lord, as it is a mere chance, whether I shall get or lose any pleasure, by staying or going, I'll willingly venture a few minutes, if my lady thinks we are too soon for Mrs. Cornelys'.——

Mrs. Cornelys', Madam——'Tis hardly eight o'clock.——

We all sat down.

Are

Are you just from France, My Lord?—

Yes, My Lady.——

All life in Paris?——

In London we think so, and never was there a more glaring mistake. No people can excel the French in the *appearance* of happiness——none are less so in reality.

Idleness, pride, and luxury display a brilliant show: 'tis the general spirit of the nation, though each individual is weighed down with taxes, arbitrary laws, the cupidity of their priests, and the despotism of their ministers. Was it not for the noble and spirited resistance of their parliaments against the impertinent authority of the pope, and the unjust and ambitious designs of the few wicked courtiers who are at the helm of administration, France would be in as abject slavery as Venice or Turkey.——

Yo

rd?— You must own, My Lord, that their education is better than ours.——

If the French, My Lady, possessed more virtue, talents, valour, and patriotism, than we, I should be of your opinion, but as the contrary is palpable——

so in What notions you have got, Lord Peterston! How came you to think that virtue was a necessary part of modern education?——In what university, or academy, is that either thought of or practised?——

he del If generosity, courage, learning, and not for equity, are to be met with in England, f their they are the effects of liberty, which produces emulation, and leads to grandeur and heroism, or of a disposition in our organs, better adapted to receive an impression of the great, noble, or sublime. This is an accidental advantage we owe to nature, My Lord, or to the wisdom

wisdom of our constitution, and sufficient
only to form a patriot, a general, an ora-
tor, or a man of sense : but for the ac-
complishments that constitute a fine gen-
tleman, it is unreasonable not to acknow-
ledge we receive them from France.

Are not almost all our people of rank
and fortune educated in Paris ?——Is not
our vying here with each other who shall
best mimic the French, and turn common
sense into buffoonery, an unanswerable ar-
gument against you ?——

That only proves, we have but few
good heads amongst us, Madam, and I am
heartily sorry for it.——

Few ! when the whole nation——

The whole nation, My Lady ! I hope
not.——

Yes, the whole nation. Are not the
people of quality the whole nation ? Do
not both the town and country take their

fashion

cient fashions and manners from us, and we
 ora- from France? Don't we import from our
 e ac- neighbours our countenances and com-
 gen- plexions, as well as our silks, laces, and
 now- cambrics.——

Does not that confirm that there are
 rank very few good heads amongst us? What
 s not will become of our manufacturers, Ma-
 shall dam, our artists, our merchants, our——

nmon Are we to trouble ourselves about them?
 le ar- Is it not for ourselves we dress, dance,
 t few and use costly furniture? Must we look
 I am frightful, and live miserably, that a few
 thousands of our own countrymen may
 not starve? Can they do any thing for us
 with taste? What matters it that those
 I hope *unborn* plebeians are loaded with wretched-
 ness, so long as we flutter at St. James's,
 ot the with gaiety, elegance, and splendour?—
 ? Do What is the welfare of our country, what

their are

shion

are the lives of thousands, when opposed by fashion ?——

I wish, My Lady, the parliament would lay a tax upon every Englishman, who shall search for his manners out of England, and not be pleased with its produce.——

You are too much of a gentleman, My Lord, not to except the ladies in your motion for a penalty.——

Are not our ladies endued with beauty, delicacy, and sense ? What need of foreign art when so much favoured by nature ? Were they to value what we have at home, and set the example of patriotism, who would not follow it ? Who would not be the first to display his love and impartiality for an ingenious and respectable nation ?——What an——

How do you like the French ladies, My Lord ?——

The

They have some charms——

Have they! Well, that is something at least France can boast of.——Some charms!——

The French, Madam, have great parts, great qualities, and perhaps some advantages over us—But I wish the English—

Pray, Sir, give me leave to ask you what are those advantages over us?——

Indeed, My lady, you are so warm an advocate for the French that I could not help complying——

How! Lord Pelerston knows how to flatter, and comply against his own sentiments! Is not that a French way?—

It will be the way of all the world when Lady Pelham——

Worse, and worse, My Lord.

I think, My Lady, Lord Pelerston is to be commended for his sincerity.——

You think so, Carolina?——

Do

Do protect me, Lady Carolina.—

You have no need of her interest, Sir, a nobleman of your principles is an honour to his country : I was in jest, and you have pleased me mightily. I am glad you deserve the good opinion which the public entertains of you.

How agreeably undeceived did Lord George appear ! How gratefully he thanked my mother !——How unwillingly, Victoria, how unwillingly he took his leave !

When he was gone, Lady Pelham told me she wished such a husband for her Carolina.—Carolina smiled, kissed her hand, tript to the coach, and flew to Soho. — Five o'clock ! — The day breaking upon me !——Adieu.

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L E T T E R

L E T T E R XIII.

The same to the same.

I Wish, Victori, you would send me the recipe of your art of pleasing, that it might be spread through the three kingdoms for the honour and advantage of our sex.

Lady Preston says there is no living with me, I set such a value upon you, at the expence of every other individual——She whispers now and then, that I have lost several admirers I might have kept in my chains, had I not unseasonably spoke of my amiable friend.

If I am not more loved and respected for commending beauty and modesty, what will help me to love and admiration? And if men wish for the object of my praises,

praises, am I not amply rewarded by the assurance that virtue and delicacy have not yet forsaken them?—

Would you appear but a week in London—But no—stay at Brenton-hall for though Carolina has the most exalted friendship for her Victoria, she has too her share of vanity ; and vanity, in some circumstances, is not always a rational quality.

I verily believe I could suffer you to enjoy an universal empire over mankind. But was your reign to begin, whether it should not be weak enough to enter the lists to claim it, is really doubtful.

Who can flatter themselves to be great, noble, and without envy in every situation of life? Being neither a fool, nor an enthusiast

thus far

Enthusiast, I will not pretend to heavenly virtues with a mortal frame.—A Letter from Cumberland !

What have you written, Victoria !—What have I read !—Am I not deceived ?—Is it then true that Frosby was jealous ?—Jealous !—The purest heart is not free, in the polite world, from the suspicion of inconstancy : but Victoria, a stranger to art, dissimulation, and flattery—The ingenuous Victoria, who never spoke but truth—who never acted but with reason !—how guilty the man who dares to call her sincerity in question !—How ridiculously profane !

If Victoria is not happy in the man she loves, who can expect to be so ? Are all men so unjust and ungenerous, or is it a disease peculiar to a few ?—

“ Frosby

“Frosby came, and falling at your feet
 declared his fears—ventured a doubt”
 Ah! Victoria, had he had to do with C
 rolina—And you, sweet creature, did co
 descend “to listen—and to forgive.”
 have no patience—I hate you heartily.

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LETTER

L E T T E R XIV.

Sir JOHN MODISH to Lord PELHAM.

AFTER three days hard travelling through dirt and snow, I reached at last my native hall, without vapours or broken bones.

Must I not be immensely in love, Frederick, thus to have braved the weather under its most hideous shapes? And it is the roving Sir John, who willingly exposed his delicate frame to the merciless inclemencies of a tempestuous season for a girl of eighteen!——

How you would laugh at me, was not the enchanting Victoria the object of so much heroism!—She excuses and justifies all, the heavenly maid!—More rationally might a man turn knight-errant in the defence of her charms, than a commoner lose his popularity and virtue for the miserable honour of a place, or a title.—What are grandeur, riches, and distinction, to the unspeakable pleasure of wandering over rocks and mountains, through valleys and forests, to assert the superiority of the most exquisite beauty, the most exalted character that heaven ever formed?

What greater encouragement to forget the whole world, than to hear her voice, and gaze on her lovely figure?—A sensible being can never wish—never dream of a more satisfactory sensation—a more engaging bliss—

bliss.—Far from me the idea of any other happiness—All my desires are centered in the sight of my Victoria, and the flattering hope of pleasing her.

Were you to behold Victoria, no longer, Frederick, would you defy the allurements of love.—How quickly undone by the bewitching illusions surrounding her!—how suddenly changed into a very lover!—how delighted with the new emotion!—how vexed not to have felt it sooner! The greater your wisdom, parts, and delicacy, the more rapid would her triumph be, and your defeat.

She has hundreds of resistless charms to force her empire into the proudest heart.—Innumerable graces constantly sit upon her, and call for our homage.

Who could behold—who could listen—who
and not submit, not adore!—Impossible—impossible.

11 o'Clock.—

The gay, the fluttering Sir Jon Modish—
who never once seriously pronounced “
love you”—who never courted pleasures
which were not graced by pride, fashion
or inspired by the enthusiasm of youth
blood—who would hazard both life and
fortune to be sung, celebrated, and tal
ed of—Oh, Frederick! cannot you restor
me to the identity of that vain, noi
f carelefs fellow?—I look for him in m
elf—but where is he?

If no longer Sir John Modish—wh
am I—Am I not really that very Sir Jo

who could deny reason, laugh at morality, admire Hobbes, applaud Bolingbroke, and soberly indulge in every folly? Love surely has not such a power, and were I once more in the airy regions of St. James's, I should recover from this fall.

There is a Talisman in these mountains, so powerfully opposite to vice and modern taste—so forcibly attractive to honour, religion and virtue—Why came I hither after an absence of fifteen years?—Curiosity, my Lord, curiosity---How severely am I punished for it!

Lady Carolina, the lovely Lady Carolina, never ceased to praise her Victoria—"She had every qualification, every beauty, every virtue, that could possibly be wished for."

It was so new to me, to hear one hand
 some woman 'speak so favourably of another, that I longed to know if there could
 be such a treasure hidden in Cumberland.—I came, Frederick, and saw the terrestrial
 angel.—I knew not which was most to be commended, Lady Carolina for
 doing justice to her friend, or Lady Victoria for deserving her encomiums so well.—
 How generous Lady Carolina ! but how fatal her generosity to me !

Awed by the sacred aspect of virgin de-
 cency——conscious of my own unworthi-
 ness, I addressed at a distance my homage
 to the deity ; but the fame of my follies
 being between her and me, I was com-
 pelled to love——sigh——and adore in
 silence.

Dejected almost to distraction, not daring to speak, to look, to offer my incense, I left the country in a moment of despair, and fled for relief to London.

I tried, I abused every pleasure———In spite of my most fertile imagination, the idea of Victoria still intruded, and damped the brilliant wanderings of my reason.—No days without thinking—no nights without dreaming of her———Dead to pleasure, though eager to enjoy it---What a situation, my Lord, what a wretched situation!

At last, certain of being a slave—a despised slave, I came back to find fault with Victoria---to rebel---to break my chains.

1 o'Clock.

On Monday last I went to Brenton-hall.---Frederick, how shall I tell thee of my shame?—How weak, how disconcerted in the presence of beauty, when virtue, imprinted on every feature, gives life to the angelic form, and commands our respect and admiration!—The intrepid Sir John paid his devoirs to the ingenuous Victoria with a faltering voice—a trembling leg—a shaking hand—a lively red on his cheek—a stupid confusion in his eyes—Could you have believed it, my Lord?—Could you have thought it possible?—From such a height sunk so low!—Heavens!—---and I have out lived the disgraceful minute.

By

By good luck, Mrs. Brenton attributed my unmanly carriage to the intense coldness of the day.—

You look not so well as you did, Sir John——This climate will not agree with the softness of a courtier's complexion——Sit nearer the fire——

I drew so near it——

Not so near neither, you may endanger your health by so rapid a transition from cold to extreme heat.—

Dear Madam——I am better——

And I sat next to Victoria.

What do they say in London, Sir John?—

I think, Madam, it would be more *propos* to tell you what they do not say——

Why so?—

They are so unnecessarily taken up with mighty trifles, so busy about nothing——

How was Lady Carolina, Sir John?—

Then, Frederick, I became an orator and, thanks to your charming sister, was listened to with complacency and attention.

How I long to see her, Sir John! But the dear girl delights too much in London: she will not leave it for Brenton hall——There is no life here for my Carolina.—

The conversation having lasted half an hour, to the great comfort of your dis-

treffed

pressed friend, Mrs. Brenton desired I would spend the day with them—You may be sure I gave her not the trouble of another invitation.

I shall be back in two minutes, said Mrs. Brenton, and she rose to go out of the room.

“There is a fine opportunity for you, Sir John.”

You think so, my Lord : but there is no such thing with Lady Victoria. When I tell you there is no such thing, you may believe me: no body would have more readily seized it, and since I did not, depend upon it there was none——no, none, even for the word of *Love*.

How can you prefer this retreat, my Lady, to London?—this retreat to the society

society of your Carolina?—Why so solitary when so eminently formed to be seen—admi——

I know Carolina has the highest friendship for me; but she has a noble heart, Sir John. I should forfeit her esteem was I to leave Mrs. Brenton, whilst my presence can contribute to her happiness.——Gratitude is in the heart of Carolina—but what virtues has not my discreet and sensible friend?——Am I alone with so many duties to discharge, with an aunt for whom I feel the love and respect of a daughter? Would you think yourself alone, Sir, with a tender parent?——

What would you have had me answer to that question, Frederick? Yes or No?——

“Neither of them, Sir John.”

Very

Very right, my Lord, the No was so impertinent a lie, the Yes such an unreasonable truth——

Your notions are so refined, Madam, that few people upon earth——

Refined ! are they not in nature and reason ?——

Yes, my Lady : but they are so little attended to in a world where opinion and convenience favour the contrary sentiments, that it seems to be tacitly agreed not to mind them at all : of course, there are very few Carolinas——very few Victorias——and still fewer men who deserve them.——

Your remark is too severe, Sir John : the world is not so bad——'tis a real misfortune to believe it so——
'Tis an outrage both to society and ourselves.

Prin-

Principles, my Lady, contradicted by pleasure or self-interest, have no effect on men swayed by every blast of passion, every caprice of the age: the distemper being almost universal, shame no longer disgraces those who labour under it.

Virtue has few votaries, and reason is led and intoxicated by the most trifling whim or desire. Fashion and luxury have driven men from every hold of honour, and honesty; and no pretext is left untried to justify the delirious flights of our heads and hearts. Modesty is called awkwardness, innocence stupidity——

Stop, Sir John, stop. What an odious and despicable character you give me of mankind! Is it possible that men should have deviated so far from the dignity of their nature, as to resist the sacred voice of reason, and coolly spurn at morality,

whose

whose precepts are ingrafted in our hearts?—Will not the neglect of these supreme laws, fill society with the utmost disorder, and diffuse a general contempt of friendship, justice, and probity?—There may be men, indeed, whom a mean education has caused to err, and dishonour humanity——

Alas! my Lady, 'tis not of them I speak. They are generally obedient to the laws, and attached to religion. Their vices are as insignificant as their virtues, being soon punished if guilty, and never rewarded though truly deserving. 'Tis the men of rank, and fashion——'tis the learned I have characterised.——Those only who enjoy wealth, credit and power, possessing innumerable means to be vicious with impunity, readily gratify their passions, and——

Mrs.

Mrs. Brenton coming in with Frosby, I rose up——Lady Victoria received him with a chearful look and a half smile——.

Mr. Frosby is tall, well-shaped, and has a noble air; was he more *dégagé*, and lively in his countenance, he might cut a handsome figure at Lady A-La-Mode's rout, he talks well, and sensibly at Brenton-hall—but would hardly be intelligible anywhere else. The man would do to perfection for the pulpit——he——But why of Frosby, when my heart is full of Victoria!

Dear Frederick! How she has composed my restless spirits by her affability! Divine creature! How sweet tempered, though virtuous!——how

gay

gay, though discreet!——How the
 day slipped away!——I came resolved
 to hate, and to be free!——What a
 monstrous letter!——Forgive, Frede-
 rick, the transports of a lover, who could
 write for ever of the beauty he adores.
 Adieu.

Modish-hall--176—

LETTER

L E T T E R XV.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady
VICTORIA NEVIL.

VICTORIA forgives her Carolina
and though my expressions are prett
severe, she "don't know but Frosby might
deserve them was she to consult reason
her judgment against him."

Well I knew, Victoria, that love could
neither annihilate, in your heart, the hol
ties of friendship, nor render you unjust
towards Carolina. I had no need of any
new proofs of the solidity of your princ
ples, and greatness of soul; I wrote to
Victoria, and was certain she would have
challenged my sincerity, had I not spoken
what I really thought.—How then could

not condemn !——But as you have forgot the past injuries, and Frosby has promised never to renew them, I am silent.

Sir John has made his appearance at Brenton-hall. “He was polite and submissive to a scruple to Mrs. Brenton : he kissed her cat——played with her lap-dog——fed her birds——sung when desired——and lost his money at piquet.”

He must undoubtedly take with the old lady, or I am prodigiously deceived : these trifles are of the greatest moment when done with grace, and a becoming spirit.

“He did her the honour of the virtues conspicuous in my Victoria.”

How

L E T T E R XV.

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VICTORIA NEVIL.

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“He did her the honour of the virtues conspicuous in my Victoria.”

How

How he flattered her pride !

“ And Mrs. Brenton was heard to say,
This is a man indeed !”

Was it a sneer or a compliment ?——
Is it for being like no body of her acquaintance, that he has pleased or displeased her fancy ?——You should have given me a sketch of her looks, and manner of pronouncing the words.

“ Sir John was gay, thoughtless, witty——and neither noisy nor troublesome.—He was cold but complaisant to Frosby—decent and respectful to Victoria——and she has not to complain of one look or expression.

You are amazed, that “ a man can so easily skip from the extremes of libertinism

to those of decency, and you question whether he is not all falsehood and perfidy, since such a change can only be the work of time, or the fear of universal desertion and contempt."

Your observation, Victoria, may be just with respect to men naturally vicious, or hardened in corruption through idleness, habit, or stupidity: but they who, like Sir John, have been solely led astray by fashion, youth, and caprice, are quickly recalled to the paths of honour, discretion, and virtue.——There are always hopes of a man of parts, spirit, and ingenuity.—I could give you many instances of people of rank, who are universally esteemed, though they——But to what purpose should I justify Sir John?——You have no intention to take him for a lover-----
cannot

cannot he do for an acquaintance ?-----
 he seems what he really is not, why be-
 offended at him so long as he is not
 himself ?

Sir John is to be commended for
 waiting upon Victoria with the badges of
 as many good qualities as he can pos-
 sibly adorn himself with. 'Tis an ho-
 mage he pays her virtues, and an evident
 acknowledgment of her superiority over
 him.-----Adieu, be happy, and no
 longer complain of my silence.

“ I will not forgive it, Carolina.”-----

You must, Victoria, you must-----
 I had nothing material to write-----
 No, nothing material.-----

“ Ca

---" Carolina, Carolina! and Lord Pe-
 ay be-cton!"-----

Will you not believe me, Victoria?
 Adieu.

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L E T.

L E T T E R XVI.

The same to the same.

LADY Pelham has just sent an invitation to Lord Pelerston to dine with us to-morrow.

Men, said she to me, cannot be perfectly known but by a familiar communication: one hour of friendly conversation of unaffected tittle-tattle, brings them more effectually to our knowledge, than ten years of formal visits.

If Lord Pelerston bears examination and deserves my daughter's good opinion, he will be welcome at any time, without the necessity of a compliment-card.—I beg my Carolina will always speak to her mother with the openness of a friend.

and never distinguished her from the amiable Victoria.—If any thing of moment—if any preference for Lord Pelerston—

And she cast on me such a piercing look, Victoria!

I imagine, Carolina, that my suspicions were not so ill founded—

Dear My Lady—

And I stopped, undetermined what to answer, so surprised was I at the unexpected discovery.

Can Carolina hesitate to disclose to me the secrets of her heart!—Does she question my love for her?

And tenderly throwing her arm round my neck—

What does my Carolina think?—Has Lord Pelerston made any impres-

F sion

sion on my lovely daughter?—If it were so, is Carolina to be ashamed of her passion?—Is not Lord Pelerston the man?

Such a good mother, Victoria!

I leaned my head upon her bosom, to hide a blush, but was betrayed by a trickling tear.—

Speak, my love, speak: I am thy friend.—How is it with thee?—

Indeed, Madam, I am this moment more affected by your extreme generosity, than any regard I entertain for Lord Pelerston.—

But at any other moment, how does he affect you?

I neither love, nor hate him.—

Hate him! Why should you?—I won't have you hate him, Carolina.—Come—sit down,—nearer me—nearer still.—Now, tell me all—I'll keep thy secret: depend on me.

Then

Then, then, Victoria, I knew not
how to begin—what to tell.

'Tis so trifling, dear mother—such
nonsense.—

Well, let me have that nonsense.—
Cannot you grace it?—Let me see how
eloquent and feeling my Carolina is.—

I smiled, and taking both her hands in
mine—

I accidentally saw Lord Pelerston at
the play-house—he was in the next box—
he talked with so much sense—so much wit,
that I could not help listening—and being
pleased.—No man ever fixed like him
the eyes, and attention of your Carolina.—

I kissed her hand.

When I came home, Lady Preston,
who had been with me to the play, ob-
served I was absent and perplexed, tho'
I did all in my power to humour her lively
temper.—You yourself, my Lady, re-
marked my being unusually grave and

thoughtful.—I own I liked to call back the voice, the features of the unknown man, and to muse upon him.—I knew not his name, nor did I see him again till his visit to you.—

You have seen him since:—he has been here often—Is he sensible of my Carolina's worth?—

Were there any sincerity in a man's eyes, and expressions, I would make no doubt of his affection.—

Has he declared himself?—

No. But he looks—he speaks—so much to the purpose—he is so assiduous—so respectful—so full of meaning when silent—One day this week, as we were down to cards, he stole behind my chair and softly whispered—so softly!—"Happy the man who shall please the amiable Carolina!"—Is this a sign he loves you, Carolina, dear mother?—

And you neither lo-ve, nor hate him?
Spare your daughter—spare your Carolina——

And I fell at her feet.

I ought to resent your unfriendly discretion, Carolina.—But—but——

She pressed me to her bosom——

Thy choice is thy forgiveness.—May
Fletcherston know all thy value, and deserve
thy love.—

And Lord Fanfly, dear mother, Lord
Fanfly, that man so lavish of his stupidity!
—so presumingly tedious!——

A fine encomium, Carolina, a fine
comium indeed!——

So teasing!——so plaguing!——so
extremely odious!——

Why don't you keep to your closet,
take a book, or have a head-ach, when
your headache comes?——

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voice, the features of the unknown man
and to muse upon him.—I knew not his
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 amia te a book, or have a head-ach, when
 s yo comes?——

Then must I be for ever sick alone.—When is he not here?—

A hard case upon my word for young Lady of your beauty and spirit ———Why don't you marry Lord Charles to get rid of him?—

Dear mother——

Come, don't be uneasy—I'll see what is to be done: go and get ready for the opera.

As I was going——

Hear me, Carolina---Be sure to leave at your toilet, that loving face of yours ---I will not be deprived of my gay Carolina.——Remember, let me not feel for you when you are with me.

Are you not in love with Lady Pelham dear Victoria, for being so good to her Carolina?---the excellent mother!——

What's the matter, Lucy?——

My Lady waits for——

Aligh

A light, quickly, a light, I must seal
this letter.——

Scold me no more, sweet Victoria,
for not having written to you sooner
about Lord Pelerston: I had——

Come, Lucy, fold this, and I'll to
the looking-glass——Have I no flowers?

Here they are, my Lady.——

Adieu, Victoria, adieu.

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F 4

LET-

L E T T E R XVII.

Sir JOHN MODISH to Lord PELHAM.

TIS death to doubt, but worse than death to know we have a rival—a rival favoured by Victoria!——Killing certainty!——

Alas! Why have I not the insensibility of a stoic? Why did Nature give me a soul so passionate——spirits so inflammable?——Fatal present!——What fortitude is not required to bear the sight of an happy rival, when our hearts are filled and torn by love, the fiercest of all passions!

Is it not cowardice rather than magnanimity, that prompts me to forgive?
——Could virtue hold my arm, and triumph

triumph over my thirst of revenge?——

An happy rival!——Oh, Frederick!

Keep me from yielding to an ungenerous thought——preserve my tortured soul from the abyss of despair——let me not be unworthy of thy friendship.——

O love! thou lively and bewitching passion, how we doat upon thee!——

How charmingly thou enterst our hearts!

——how grateful thou art to our senses!——how willingly we obey whatever thou commandest!——An happy

rival!——and my hands are not yet imbrued with the last drop of his blood!

——my eyes have not yet been feasted with the sight of him inanimate at my feet!——He survives my fury!——he

is happy, and neither of us is annihilated!——Rage and madness, come and prey upon my effeminate spirits.——

set them all on fire, and diffuse over them the oblivion of honour and humanity. Let both the lovers share in my unhappiness, and plunge with me to the bottomless pit of everlasting misery.—— Must I see insulting joy sparkle in their eyes, content smile in their faces, and pleasure enliven every feature? Oh, Frederick! My virtue forsakes me; the image is too striking—the wound too deep—let me call for furies and distraction.——

Reason, reason!—Can reason oppose passion—argue with a delirious lover, and make him obey her dictates?——Thou shield of insensibility, away!——Encounter not the violent storms to which my soul is a sport!——Away!——What canst thou avail me?——Frosby shall die!-----What have I said? Frosby shall die!-----What crime has he committed,

mitted, which I would not be guilty of?
 Must Frosby die for enjoying the supreme
 bliss of pleasing Victoria?----- Has he
 stolen it from me? Was he not the first,
 ---the fortunate first, who saw, and
 adored?-----Have they injured me in
 loving each other?---What right have I
 to trouble them---to rob them of their
 felicity?---If I love Victoria, ought I not
 to revere her choice, to sacrifice my ex-
 istence to her happiness?---What a selfish
 monster am I!--To have a desire that is
 not in favour of Victoria---that is not in
 favour of Frosby-----Wretched and un-
 just Sir John, and thou thinkest thyself
 to be humane and generous!- ----Alas! let
 them love---let them be happy---let me
 not cloud the days of Victoria with sor-
 row and distress!---Inforce the virtuous
 resolution, Frederick---let not thy friend
 err,

err---reason him into benevolence.—

Adieu, I'll endeavour to compose myself, and to entertain no thought unjustifiable by honour, Frederick, and Victoria.

Modish-hall—176—

L E T

L E T T E R XVIII.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady
VICTORIA NEVIL.

I Had just stepped to my closet from breakfast, when Lord Pelham came to pay me his morning visit.

What news, brother?——

People running mad about the stamp-act!——

The stamp-act!—That's no news at all, my Lord.——

How! No news!——

No. Can any thing be right, and not be wrong in London? How could we live without parties and contradictions? Is not half the nation differently organised from the other?——Nothing more necessary to keep

keep life and spirits amongst us. There would be as much said and written about my slipper, as about Lord B*** and his enemies, was I to set it in opposition to that of the accomplished Lady Harriet St*****e. Political and religious controversy have their native seat in England, and as our temper greatly partakes of the mutability of our climate, we are always ready to engage for or against——no matter which, so we may but quarrel, slander, or defame. Were it not for this charming amusement, we should be devoured by the spleen——life would be a vexation, a real evil.——

You are very merry, sister.——

Why should I not be so? Am I to concern myself about what I cannot do, or honourably repeal when it is done?—— Was not Garrick unusually great in Macbeth on Tuesday?——

He was not, Carolina. Ever feeling, natural, and sublime Garrick is immutably himself.——

How did you like the opera last night, was it not immensely well performed?——

It had been so—but for the words and the music.—

What do you mean, my Lord: the words and the music! Is not that the whole opera?——

The whole opera! Foolish Carolina. Does it make any part of it to an English audience?—Is it not for the dances, decorations, machinery, and the honour of England alone, that we annually monopolise the best musicians of Europe?—Who ever thought, or said, if in their senses, that an unmeaning sound could please?—What are all Italian operas but discord to an English ear? What satisfaction can foreign

reign music, set to foreign words, give me? It may afford inexpressible raptures at Rome, Venice, or Florence, but in London——

How you talk, my Lord, when all the world is enchanted, ravished with the melody of——

I am glad, Carolina, you are so mighty fond of it: As for me, I would rather hear Artaxerxes, and a Handel, than Valentini, and all the Cafarelli's of Italy.—

Oh the barbarian, the barbarian! A Peer of England not a virtuoso! And my brother!——Shame, shame for Carolina——You dare to smile——Out of my closet, out of my closet, or this moment recant——yes——you must recant——

Are you mad, Carolina?——

Thank you, my Lord——But tell me, my very wise brother, why, spite of the *bon-ton*, you dare to think well of

the English? Can they sing, dance, or perform, like the sprightly inhabitants of the South? Were not this really the case, should we be such fools as to pay twenty times as much for diversions we can find at home?——What have you to answer?——Are we indeed such fools? Pray speak, my Lord——

We are, Carolina.——

We are!——And you are not yet out of my sight!——

You are not then of my opinion, sister?——

Of your opinion!——Since you will not favour me with an immediate retreat, I'll take a book, and speak no more.——

Whence that contempt, Carolina, when lately you had so high an opinion of our English performers?——

I,

I, my Lord!—you mistake—A Lady of taste and fashion!——

So, with a splendid fortune, you would employ no native?——

No—in no way whatever.——

I thought that once Lady Fanfly——

Lady Fanfly!——This is not to be borne——I will play and sing my favourite air *Fate la Carita*, if you do not march off.——

Well, do: I'll listen with the greatest pleasure.——

Will you really?——

I will indeed.——

And you think to betray me to your opinion by a fawning compliment?—

My opinion! I never believed you differed from me.—

Such another word, and I am to the harpsichord.—

Let me lead you to it—

And

And you would have me play?—

Certainly.—

I'll please you then, my Lord.—

Pray—what tune?—Where's your collection of Mary-bone and Vauxhall songs?—Which of them.—

His Lordship could stand it no longer, he burst into laughter, and retired crying, What a girl! what a girl!—Remember your commands.

LET.

L E T T E R X I X .

The same to the same.

MOST of the company had already come when Lord Pelerston entered the room. I beheld him, Victoria, without a swimming head, or an aching heart. He presented me with a rose : I smiled, made a fine curtsy, and put it in my bosom.

Had you seen how the man's eyes sparkled with joy at the distinguished honour I paid his flower, how he looked whenever I smelt it, you would have complimented me for making such a noble use of a trifle.

Why should we not set off a nothing to its best advantage when it may fill a lover's breast with pleasure, without discovering our real sentiment ?

“ Caro-

“ Carolina ! Lovers are so eager after the least shadow of a promising possibility——so diligently watchful of a motion or a look”——

Well, Victoria, what then ?——

“ Only that Lord Pelerston easily read in your countenance how generous you was, and that’s a *bagatelle* you know. What could he infer from your peculiar attention to his flower ? Nothing at all, to be sure, men are so modest, so unwilling to be agreeably deceived, so averse to their own happiness”——

And so, Victoria, you think Lord Pelerston said to himself, “ this girl loves me,” and that to his rose he is indebted for the daring thought.——

I am afraid you are right, for, Lady Preston stealing it out of my bosom, I inconsiderately run after, and recovered it with an emotion I could not suppress.

Lord

Lord Pelerston darted at me such a grateful eye——and then coming to me——

How kind you are, Lady Carolina!—

Was not the man very indiscreet, Victoria?

Oh! my Lord, I am so fond of a rose: it looks so gay at this season of the year——

And then, turning to my seat, I left him to consider whether he had not mistaken me.

I was not a little startled at his Lordship's presumption, and concluding that the most insignificant present, naturally, becomes of consequence, when given by

lover, I instantly gave myself the look of indifference.

At dinner we had words for reason, and flander for wit: None outshone in that eminent French accomplishment my Lady Courtly, and Lord Fanfly.

I congratulated his Lordship upon his unusual sprightliness, and obligingly complained he had never before favoured me with so many *bon mots*.

How severe, my Lady! Was I ever different from myself? How come I to please to say?——Is it in compliment to Lady Courtly you are so indulgent to me?——

In compliment to me! cried her Lordship with a sneer—To yourself my Lord, yourself you are indebted for Lady Carolina's

rolina's encomiums on your brilliant *vie*
cit  , and the delicate *choix* of your ex
 pressions.—

Madame, vous avez bien de la bonn  
 'Tis true I have made the tour of Eu
 rope—

C'est une belle chose, my Lord, *que*
vo  ager. How we improve by it! W
 talk, move, think so wretchedly before
 we set off, but when we return, *qu'en*
charmant, aimable, &   l  gant !---- W
 you ever at Venice, Lord Pelerston?

Yes, my Lady.----

Delightful spot! I cannot concei
 how a young nobleman can think of
 tiring to the *triste, enfum  , & abominable*
 London, after having once enjoyed
plaisirs du Carnaval. This Island is

most shocking corner of the globe. Is it not so, Lord Fanfly?——

To be sure, my Lady, to be sure.

You have been a *Cicisbeo* in Genoa, Lord Pelerston?—

No, Madam: I never had that honour.——

Not a *Cicisbeo*! unfortunate indeed!—

How could you possibly spend your time?—

I was very busy, my Lady——

Busy! à votre âge, my Lord! Busy in Italy——*Cela me passe.*——Pray what was you so busy about?——

The study of manners, policy——

And it was for the manners and policy of a people you had no concern with, that you left England, and was not a *Cicisbeo*! Prodigious upon my honour. Was the study of mankind of greater moment than the waiting as a *galant serviteur* upon a

fine lady in Italy?—Did you study mankind, Lord Fanfly?—

Mankind, my Lady! Not I indeed—

I thought so.—What is that study good for, Lord Pelham?—Mankind!—

It is a very necessary and useful study, my Lady.—

Necessary, my Lord!—Pray no more of it; since it is necessary, it must not be agreeable to be explained.—Is it not so, Lord Fanfly?—

To be sure, my Lady, to be sure.

Lord Pelerston, your snuff-box has something peculiarly striking: will you give me leave to look at it?—how curiously designed!—how admirably executed!—how charmingly inlaid!—Each part is a beauty—*et l'ensemble est parfait.*—Bought in Paris, no doubt?—

No,

No, my Lady, I had it made in London—

In London!—well—I believe it—
 Strange how absent I was!—This Cupid and this arrow want proportion—
 no *finesse* in Venus's smile—the garland
 is extravagantly loaded—what confusion
 in the colouring!—no part is finished—
l'ensemble est detestable—Shall we
 go to cards, Lady Pelham?—

As you please, my Lady—

I thought, said Lord Pelerston, as he
 led me out of the dining-room, that fri-
 volity and impertinence should never
 have disgraced the quality of England—
 an unhappy land, where honour and dis-
 cretion are no longer esteemed but by a
 few!—And you could escape the fatal
 contagion, amiable Carolina!—You

No, G 2 could

could glory in reason and virtue, though
graced with wit and beauty—

Less partiality, my Lord.—Believe
me, though opinion commands the man-
ners of ladies of fashion, it has no influ-
ence on their hearts—

Generous Lady Carolina!—How wor-
thy of being admired!—How—how I
love you!—

Come, Carolina, said Lady Preston
let us have some music.—

With all my heart.—

Lady Pelham that minute calling
Lord Pelerston, Carolina tript to her
closet, followed by the “how I love
you!”

I sat directly to the hapsichord, but
the "how I love you!"

How you play, Carolina! are you
not ashamed?—Come—to it a-
gain—you don't accompany me—I
cannot sing. —

Could I help it, Victoria! Did he not
say, "how I love you!"—Bewitching
words!—Preston, am I right?—

Not quite—so so—now you are—
What is the matter with you, Carolina?—
wrong again.—

Ah! Did he not say "how I love
you!"

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L E T T E R XX.

Lady VICTORIA NEVIL to Lady CAROLINA PELHAM.

THough every line of yours, Carolina, should be for the future filled with invectives against Mr. Frosby, rely on my forgiveness. I will smile at the lively strokes, and admire your wit.

—Never tire when you tell me, I must cease to love him——must cease!—It is already done, Carolina, believe me, I love him no more.

Why should I?——Has he not invited me to hate him?——has he not bespoke my contempt by his behaviour?——has he not wantonly trifled with my peace by forcing into my heart passions I never knew before?——What had I to do

with

with anger and hatred, when so charmed with his love and my own?——Wa
he to inspire me with them, Carolina, and
to be their first object? Could not he
be pleased without rendering me mis-
erable?——

I am such a stranger to the new guests
which have intruded into my heart, that
I sincerely wish they would depart. Their
language is quite unintelligible to me.—
Alas! was I to learn it from Frosby?—
From Frosby!——Ah, Carolina, could
you have thought it?

How often has he not sworn at my
feet, he would love me for ever!——
Nay, even yesterday he had the very
look, the very countenance, as the first
day in which he declared his passion. He
was cautious of displeasing, and fearful to
G 4 offend

offend.——Modesty, love, and discretion, were beautifully blended in his air and manners.——Never was he so loving, so amiable, so delicately attentive.——I gloried in my lover, happy in his virtues, conscious of his love, and my power over him!—It was a dream, Carolina——a dream from which he this morning awaked me.----How I hate him!---Why did he draw off the veil that concealed him from me, when the full view was to be so unfavourable and destructive!---Never would I have attempted to free myself from the enchanting error, so charmingly was I entertained with it.-----Delightful deception! and Frosby has destroyed it!---How I hate him!

I never thought Frosby could be unjust--Is not injustice a vice, and the character

of a base soul?---Oh, Carolina! My pen drops from my fingers-----I must take breath.



Frosby unjust!-----so low and contemptible!---and I love him!---No, no, Carolina, I love him no more---I will have no foible which reason can upbraid me with.

Fatal knowledge!---One vice is linked to hundreds.---When we blush not for one, are not others ready to follow at the first call of passion?---One step from virtue----my head swims----my heart is torn---I will write no more.



I have wandered by myself through the garden and the little park, and though I carefully avoided every place that could recall the idea of Frosby, I said, here
he

he stole a kiss, and was forgiven—there he presented me a flower which he would himself have put in my bosom, had I not snatched it from him—in this place he spoke of love, and I listened to him—in that, I answered his sighs, and told I loved.—Oh, Carolina! Then—then he was worthy of me.—I will forgive he ever spoke—I ever listened.—

I can neither sit nor walk.—Alas how painful to hate!—Was my heart my tender heart to feel that torment—Victoria, to hate!—Frosby to be hated!—I am distracted!—Detest love, Carolina, detest it, never think of it, fear the mischievous God the pains he causes are unspeakable and not to be borne.—Avoid mistrust, listen not to Lord Pelerston—like Frosby, he may talk deceit—look
softness

softness——smile thy soul into the
 belief he loves thee——Solitude adds
 to my dejection, and enlivens my for-
 row——Yesterday, so happy——
 to-day, so wretched——What a sad
 change in a few hours!——Un-
 just, ungrateful Frosby!——How great
 his remorse, if he love and repents!——
 How miserable has his indiscretion made
 me!——How many tears! Can he
 ever expiate for them!——In what esteem
 I held him!——Oh! I love him no
 more——I hate him.

If he loves and repents!——Carolina,
 I'll relent—I'll pity him——If he feels
 but the half of my vexation, he must be
 pitied.——How could he support the
 horrors which will follow his return to
 reason——his return to love——his
 conviction of having offended.——Shall

I be mercilefs?—I mercilefs!—Oh! Carolina, Carolina!——

I was reading your laſt letter when Froſby came in.

A letter from Lady Carolina?

Yes, Sir.—

Will you favour me with a peruſal of it?——

I was ſurprized at his curioſity, and ſighed a negative.

I am very likely concerned in it.—

You are not, Sir.——

If ſo, would you reſuſe to ſhew it me?---

Does Mr. Froſby doubt my word?---

My Lady——can you have any ſecrets which I may not know?—

My ſecrets are yours—would you have me betray thoſe of Lady Carolina?—

Mighty ſecrets, to be ſure, ſince I am not to be truſted with them!——And you prefer your friend to me, my Lady?—

Would

Would not you despise me, Sir, were I to sacrifice my honour to your curiosity?

Could you hesitate, did I require it?
—Am I to hold the second rank in your heart—Lady Carolina to have the first!
—Convince me she has it not by delivering me that letter.—

I refused—he insisted, till at last, vexed to the soul, I reproached him with his indiscretion. Then, Carolina, he turned pale with anger, and flung out of the room exclaiming, “And I thought she loved me! great God! and I thought she loved me!”—Is not such behaviour monstrous?—And I would love him!
—No, no. I love him no more—I hate him. Adieu.

L E T T E R XXI.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady
VICTORIA NEVIL.

NOTHING could be more welcome to me, than to hear of Frosby's caprice: surely the man has read my wishes, and I thank him for his seasonable impertinence.

What a difference between your first letters and the last! Should I have perused it five times over, but for the unexpected vivacity and passion with which it is written?——Thy anger against Frosby is quite a rarity to me.——

“ Can you jest, Carolina, when I am distressed.”

Jest! to be sure. Why art thou so diverting

diverting in thy sorrow, so lively in thy expression of it?——My compliments to Mr. Frosby: tell him he is my favourite, and that if he continues so charmingly smart, I shall certainly take a trip to Cumberland, to enlist him under my colours.

You love him no more?—Did you not write you loved him no more?—Well, out of friendship, I'll take him from you—It were a pity his heart should not be engaged.—Give him a hint of my good will, Victoria, and fail not to be steady in your, “I love him no more.”

“Carolina! have you not already
“Lord Fansly, and Lord Pelerston?
“What need of Frosby?”—

Never mind it, Victoria, I'll manage them all.—And then, is it nothing to free my Victoria from a troublesome lover?

What

What would you think, were I to refuse my assistance when so necessary to your peace and happiness?—No more compliments, Victoria, no more compliments, force Frosby from Brenton-hall by a careless look, and a *witty* conversation, and send him to me—if you cannot wait my coming for him myself.

“ I am afraid, Carolina, you would
“ have too much upon your hands.”—

You are afraid!—and so you will keep him, though “ you love him no more.” Have I lost my Victoria?—my Victoria, who once wrote me, “ how unjust to persuade
“ a man he is loved when we love him
“ not! how base the pride that glori-
“ ries in deceit!”—You smile, sweet Victoria, then this is not your case, and by your words, “ I love him no more,”

I must understand he is dearer and dearer to you.—

“How foolishly you talk, Carolina!”

Is it thus Victoria shows her gratitude to her Carolina?—How foolishly I talk! Must I have a share in your displeasure against Frosby? A fine return, indeed, for my generous offer to take him off your hands!—I dare say you would have me write, that Frosby was very indiscreet to ask a sight of my letter, and were I to add, he was a fool to insist on what you would not grant, and to leave the room with, “and I thought she loved me! great God! and I thought she loved me!” Why the foolish Carolina, would no doubt be complimented with, “what an amiable creature!”

I will not be that amiable creature first, for the pleasure your letter gave me.—

“Very odd, Carolina, very odd.”

Be it so. Secondly, for the kindness of Frosby in favouring you with an opportunity of knowing him.

When so severe upon the foibles of men you “love not,” why so unconcerned about those of the only man you “do love?” Is not my Victoria’s happiness to depend upon Frosby’s character? Must my sensible friend discard reason, and obey but love? Is Frosby to be all perfection? Would he were Victoria, but he is a man—his curiosity is an insignificant whim, though it has caused you so much sorrow.—But as it may be a beginning to more important discoveries, let it not be slighted: Vic-

tor

ture, toria has too much discernment not to
gave make a proper use of it.—

Let not your judgment be guided by
kind- your heart, when you think of Frosby,
th an but let it be always so when you write
to Carolina. Adieu.

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L E T.

L E T T E R XXII.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady
VICTORIA NEVIL.

WHAT degree of folly may a man be brought to by a woman whom he loves—by whom he is detested? Lord Charles is the man I intend to raise to that height of honour, if he still persists in tormenting me.

Tired of telling him he could never please me, I yesterday assured him, twenty times that I hated him. The wretch laughed, turned upon his heel, mimicked my anger, went away, came back,

back, confidently swore he loved—and was absolutely resolved not to believe me, after a side glance he had ventured to the glass.

Upon my severely reflecting on the ridicule of his pride, he had the impertinence to protest I should be his, since no man would ever be tempted to love me—Will you know, Victoria, the reason he gave?—Why——“ I was haughty, imperious, and too fond of being courted, though I hated the lover.”

Lord Charles trusts to my father's will, and my seeming indifference! Though he has often met Lord Peterston here, it never yet entered his head, I had a heart, and that his Lordship might deserve it!

I really think I could love Lord Pelerston out of spite, was I not already inclined to love him for himself. Two rivals, of dispositions so different, must needs strike, one with pleasure, the other with disgust——No sensations can ever be so rapidly felt——Oh, Victoria! that fool, that fool, what shall I do with him?——

I was alone yesterday in the library, reclined on a sofa, and musing upon a book, when Lord Pelerston came in—How my heart did beat!—

Rise not, my Lady——

How soft was his voice !

Am I not to fear my company shall deprive you of a more agreeable amusement?—

ent?——You was reading——must I
o?——may I stay?——

I am glad to see you, my Lord, and
Lady Pelham will be here presently—

Charming Carolina——

How passionately he looked!—

I do—

Was your lordship at court this morn-
g?—

I broke off the “I do,” it so frightened
2.

No, my Lady. I knew you was not
re, and—

Then

Then, Victoria, the unwelcome Lon-
Fanfly rushed in—Oh ! that fool, that
fool, what shall I do with him?—

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L E T

Sir

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LETTER XXIII.

Sir JOHN MODISH to Lord PELHAM.

I Had been ten minutes on my way to White-haven, on a business of importance, when the trusty DUVAL, riding full speed, called the postilions to stop, flew to me, and with an exulting air, whispered that Frosby had not been seen yesterday at Brenton-hall, and that Lady Victoria appeared uneasy and chagrined. Ever ready to catch at the smallest hope of a rupture between Victoria and Frosby, and love being the most important business of my life, I instantly ordered the horses back, and drove to Brenton-hall.

E I am glad to see you, Baronet, said Mrs. Brenton, presenting me her hand.

VOL. I.

H

We

We were quite alone : your company is
a favour.——

You make me happy, Madam, in esteeming it so——Would Lady Victoria not think it disagreeable——

Why should I, when my aunt is pleased with it?—

No more ceremonies : let us sit down.—

How does Mr. Froby, Madam?—

Was I not very ungenerous, Frederick?——

A half sigh escaped the charming creature.

You know not, Frederick, how engaging a beautiful woman is when languor and anxiety are diffused over her countenance, and with what sensibility a tender heart

heart partakes of her sorrow. I could hardly, at that sigh, refrain from exclaiming against the wretch who caused it. How it went to my soul to see my Victoria absent and disturbed!—I was so moved, that though Mrs. Brenton was, at dinner, equally gay and entertaining, I had it not in my power to put on a cheerful look.

Where has Sir John left his vivacity?—

Forgive, Madam, but—I am not happy.—

How silly, how imprudent my answer, Frederick! But blunders are the wit of lovers.

These words seemed to surprise and awake Lady Victoria. She cast on me a passionate eye, and Mrs. Brenton helped me to a bumper.

Drink, Sir John, drink your melancholy away ; it does not become your age.—

From that instant, Lady Victoria seemed less pensive and dejected : but, spite of her endeavours to dissemble her inward vexation, a blush now and then informed me she thought, felt, and was unhappy.

How far was she from discovering the true cause of my concern ! What would I not have given for the presence of Frosby, to have her restored to her former tranquillity !——I wished for that man, Frederick, I wished for that man, though every expression of his—though every look of hers had pierced my heart. I detested myself for having come in hopes of a quarrel between the lovers, and would, with pleasure, have laid down my life at the feet of

Victoria

Victoria, to expiate the criminal expectation.

10 o'Clock.

What errors, Frederick, was I not led into by youth and folly, when I took appetite for love, and caprice for sentiment!—How different the passion that now chains my fierce transports, and makes me shudder at the thought of having been unjust to the amiable and virtuous object of my adoration!—Heavenly girl! never will I offend thee more—She must not know, Frederick, how much I love her—it would be a torment to her to see me miserable—let me save her generosity the feeling of my pains—What a hard task!—How to dissemble!—Shall imperious love remain tamely on my tongue!—I am afraid, Frederick, my

heart shall break in the conflict—but, for the peace of my Victoria be undisturbed; it matters not what becomes of mine.

You shall see my tulips, Sir John, said Mrs. Brenton, as she left the dining room: their variety will divert you.

Flowers are my favourite amusement.—Can a courtier think there is any pleasure in cultivating them, and that a country life may be enlivened by the innocent diversion?—

Life, Madam, is only enjoyed in the country—I really believe we vegetate in town.—

Already in the spleen! sure you are not in earnest?—

I am, my Lady, I am indeed. High life is a brilliant stage profusely decorated with costly toys, where vanity, interest, and

and folly, play the first parts at the expence of reason and nature. Our heads only are at work, in search of novelty and variety, while our hearts feel the horrors of vacuity in the midst of dissipation.—

Few pleasures, and no real happiness, are to be met with in a fashionable life— There I never found the agreeable hours I have spent at Brenton-hall—But, dear Madam, let us go to the tulips.—

Mrs. Brenton smiled, and shaking her head, Sir John! Sir John!—

Pray, Madam, let us go to the tulips, and offering my hand I led her to the garden, not daring to steal a glance at Lady Victoria.

Did I not say too much Frederick? I was ashamed of my indiscretion though

of no moment——My heart was so full——how could I keep silent?

1 o'Clock.

No flowers passed unobserved : every one was analysed and commended by Mrs. Brenton, and both ladies were not a little diverted at my repeated blunders—for truly I knew nothing of tulips.

Lady Victoria laughed so heartily, that seizing her hand——

I'll be revenged, my Lady——and I printed my lips upon it. Sweet kifs!——let me not remember it, or I am undone.

As

As I knew Mrs. Brenton was extremely fond of music, I proposed to send for Lady Victoria's harp, and retire to the bower at the end of the *parterre*.

A good thought, Sir John.—Send for your harp, Victoria.—

The harp was brought. We went to the bower, and sitting opposite to Victoria, for I would enjoy every possible charm, I was inspired by her divine touch, and the melodious sound, with all the tenderness with which I sung the cantata of *APOLLO* and *DAPHNE*.

Lady Victoria so feelingly expressed the complaints of the God, that lost in raptures, I acted my part—I forget myself—Excuse, Frederick. To me the most trifling word, or action of Victoria, is a source of delights. Let me expatiate up-

on each grace, each smile, each motion.—Oh! had I no love to combat—Help me, Frederick, to conquer my inclination—Inclination!—how weak the word!—Set my passion in its true light—Tell me 'tis impossible to please—tell me that Frosby—no—be silent. Adieu.

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LE T.

L E T T E R XXIV.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady VICTORIA NEVIL.

THIS day looked so ravishingly tempting, after a week of rainy weather, that Lady Pelham was easily persuaded by Lord Pelerston, and Sir James Parker, to take an airing in Kensington Gardens. Our conversation was at first general, but upon my expressing a curiosity to know an exotick shrub, and Lord Pelerston offering to satisfy it, we were left a few steps behind.

This shrub, Madam grows between the tropicks; it—amiable Carolina, let me not lose this opportunity of confirming to you what my eyes, my behaviour,

naviour, my faltering words, and broken sighs, have so often told you.—No man ever loved with equal passion and sincerity.

Your most humble servant, my Lord.—

And I dropped a low courtfy.

Is this you analysis of the shrub?—
I thank you for your complaisance, and am no longer curious.—

Stay, my Lady, stay—forgive my telling I love you—'tis the first time I have felt the power of beauty—none but Lady Carolina—

And so you fancy, my Lord, that Lady Carolina deserves to be complimented with your first raillery?—

Make me not the most miserable of men—talk me not into a hatred of myself——spare the disdainful look.—

How shall I look, my Lord? Must I smile, and receive your gallantry with

a grate-

a grateful sensibility? Speak—I will not have you be the most miserable of men.—

Cruel Carolina!——

Cruel, when I consider you to command my air and countenance!——Cruel, when so generous!——

How dear I pay for having seen you!——
To love, and to be despised!——Wretched Pelerston!——

Upon my word you act charmingly, my Lord, and of all things I like the “Wretched Pelerston!”——As a party is now forming among the *beau monde*, to perform a few plays, I wish you would join them.——’Tis unkind, my Lord, to bury such conspicuous talents: I should not be the last to admire, and do you justice.——

And the pains I endure are a subject of mirth to Lady Carolina! She can delight in adding to them by an inhuman
sneer!

sneer!—She laughs at the vexations
she causes!—

Pray go on, my Lord, I am so fond
of the pathetic—a few more moving
exclamations, and—you enchant me.—

So unmercifully gay!—

So artfully dejected!—

Artfully dejected, Lady Carolina!—
Can you think that perfidy is in my
heart—that my tongue can dis-
semble?—

No, no, my Lord. You are sincere,
to be sure.—

I have just a notion—your irony is
feigned, you love me.—

I love you! That's a good thought,
my Lord, against being “the most mis-
erable of men.”—How happy you are in
your ideas! I am glad, however, you
found it not sooner, for then I should
have been deprived of the “wretched

“Pelerston!”

"Pelerston!" that affected me so much.—I thank you for the seasonable discovery,—I was at such a loss how to console you——

Be good, charming Carolina; cease to banter, and frankly own you love me.——

What need of it, my Lord?——Will your imagination fail for a word?——Can't it help you to the idea I pronounced it?——

Can you refuse me your heart, Lady Carolina?——

How should I, when you ask for it?——

Could you have a heart, and not give it to the enamoured Pelerston?——

No, no, to be sure.——

And we joined Lady Pelham.

Pretty indeed, was I obliged to return sigh for sigh, and love for love, to every daring

daring, idle-fellow, who is pleased to honour me with a declaration ; and prettier still, was I to single out one, and discard all the rest !

To presume I must "love him" because he "loves me !" But will not the same reason do for his rivals ? And shall your Carolina be unjust to twenty, or love them all at once ?—The man is surely out of his senses, or has a mighty opinion of himself.

"He loves me with such a passion. Did I desire him to do so ?—" Carolina "has a heart."—What then ? Must it surrender at the first summons of his Lordship ?—Did you ever hear of such assurance, Victoria ?—

"How could the loving Carolina

how be so extremely politic, and unsin-
 tier cere?"——

Experience, sweet girl, has taught me
 to mistrust my eyes, my ears, and even
 the approbation of my heart. If we lose
 sight of reason, passion will take the lead,
 and hurry us into every extravagance
 shall prepossession is prone to. To let a
 lover in high life know our affection for
 him, is visibly the genuine offspring of
 folly. I will therefore keep behind the
 veil of seeming indifference, that I
 may not err in my judgment of the man
 who shall have the power of making me
 happy or miserable.

So many unfortunate examples at Court,
 in London, all over England, warn me
 to be prudent. Sincerity with a Frosby
 may occasion no grief, but in this de-
 graded spot, we cannot take too much
 precaution.

precaution against the vanity of men, and the insidious foibles of our hearts.—

“ And my Carolina thinks, she will keep such a strict guard on herself as not to be understood ? ” —

Understood ! that is a trifle, Victoria. I give Lord Pelerston leave to understand me, but let him never be certain he does, till I am pleased to convince him of it. —

“ If at last Lord Pelerston proves undeserving of my Carolina, or out of despair carries his incense to another shrine ” —

Well Victoria, I'll seek for another lover—that's all. —

“ And Carolina's reason will have such a power over her inclinations ? ” —

Self-love, Victoria, self-love will come to my aid, and my heart shall be free. My rank procures me innumerable resources

and resources against a too serious engagement.
 so many diversions employ both my
 will head and my heart, that I cannot possibly
 as long upon the same thought.

Carolina is not to be chained by a
 book, or a declaration.——She will
 un-prepare against the storm, and provide
 cer- for every contingent. Adieu.

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LET.

LETTER XXV.

Lady VICTORIA NEVIL to Lady
CAROLINA PELHAM.

I Tell thee, Carolina, thou lovest not.—
Thy soul, though tender by nature
and animated by fancy, is not tuned to
the moving notes of love.——Cold as
deformity, there are no raptures in thy
words, no fire on thy tongue, no panting
in thy bosom.——Lord Pelerston is the
choice of thy taste——not of thy
heart——Him thou preferrest to thy other
admirers, as we do wit to stupidity, and
modesty to assurance——He is not the
man nature formed for thee——Thou
canst reason!—I tell thee, Carolina, thou
lovest not.

Ah

Ah!——Would I were as indiffe-
rent!——What an evil is sensibility, that
fatal spring of our miseries, when exqui-
tely affected by passion!

A nothing is torment to a lover——
A doubt may make us languish under all
the racks of fear and despair, and 'a
thoughtless smile on a rival drive us to
madness. Many times have I suffered the
extremity of sorrow for a look, which ex-
pressed not an answer to my feelings——Oh,
Carolina!——thou drest to please——thou
lookest to be admired——thou art still gay
and easy——I tell thee, thou lovest not.
Adieu.——

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L E T.

LETTER XXVI.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady
VICTORIA NEVIL,

THROW away any thing that you
may be busy about, Victoria, and
should even Frosby be on his knee
crying, and crying for mercy, do
spare him: turn him out I say, and lift
to me.

Lord Fanfly had been above two
minutes in my closet, without my having
taken the least notice of him, and I was
barbarously playing, and singing the Ballad
of the Wood, to force him out of my
sight—

Can you be so intent upon your harpsichord, Lady Carolina, while I am here?—

My Lord, you are not fond of music this morning; but, may be, I play ill. Do I?—

I do not say so neither: you play well enough.

Well enough, Victoria!—

I beg your Lordship will give me a tune or two, that I may improve, for I am ambitious of attaining perfection.—

You stand in no need of me for that, Lady Carolina.—

For what then, my Lord, do I stand in need of you?—

You astonish me: did I say you did?—

Pray,

Pray, my Lord, be not over polite
tell me wherein I fail; which is the
fault I must mend?—

You will make me mad, Lady Caro-
lina.——

Then he rose up, and took such long
noisy strides, that I desired him to sit
down, for he made my head ache—

'Tis very odd that I cannot please
you.——

You think it very odd, my Lord?—

To be sure, my Lady. After twen-
ty years constant attendance, not to be more
advanced than I am in your affection, is
not that very odd?

What qualities did you rely upon to
please me, my Lord?——

What qualities, Madam!——What
qualities!——

He reddened, and his eyes flashed with indignation.—

Are you in earnest?—Am I to incur your contempt for loving you? Where is my crime?—"What qualities!" That's very strange---Had I neither natural nor acquired ones, must I be despised and ridiculed for the want of them?—I thought Lady Carolina chose fitter objects for her pleasure.—

My Lord, as you have shewn *some* sense in your answer, I wish you would never put yourself any more to the same trouble on my account. Cease to plague me with your love, and you no longer shall complain of my satire.—

Plague you! what an expression!—

Is it new to you, my Lord?—Must I tell you again, and again, that I hate you?

Is there such a pleasure in being told so, that you will expose yourself every day to the repetition of it?—

And you really hate me?—

How you talk, my Lord! Did you ever doubt it?—

The tenderest lover!—

The most tedious!—

Could I suspect I had a rival—

What then, my Lord?—

He started up in a passion, and staring wildly at me—

I would rather die an hundred deaths than let—no: no body so long as I live shall possess—Carolina, Carolina! do not make me frantic—throw me not into despair.—Forgive, forgive if I have offended—forbid me not to love you—say but you do not hate me.—

And

And the man, Victoria, was at my feet, pressing my hands, and bathing them with tears.—

This situation, my Lord, does not become you ; rise, be composed, and let me have no more of these new fits of passion, if you would not have me avoid you for ever.—

So coolly insulting!—

Sit down, lord Charles, and let us reason. Did I ever give you any hopes of pleasing me ? Did I deceitfully encourage you to love me ? If not, what have you to reproach me with ? Why do you persist in loving, when convinced of my unalterable indifference ?

Oh, Carolina ! how little are you acquainted with the sensibility of my heart, and the violence of the passion you inspire!—

Though sure, Carolina, beyond all doubt, of your hatred and contempt, could pride conquer the enchanting delight of loving you?—I do not wish it might.—
Yet me love you, let me wear for ever the chains you gave—deprive me not of that satisfaction—let me hope your heart may still be mine.——

How eloquent love rendered him, Victoria! He had such a dejected countenance, such an air of despondency, that I felt some pity; and had it not been base to dissemble my dislike, I should have left him in his pleasing error.——

My heart cannot be yours, my Lord; accuse me not of cruelty, and strive to forget me.——

To forget you, Lady Carolina!—

Yes: let me intreat you to forget me, and to seek for happiness where it may be bestowed

bestowed upon you. How many ladies, more deserving of you, would listen to your vows, and reward your constancy!—

Talk not to me of another love, dear Carolina.—Send me not in pursuit of an imaginary bliss, when the reality is only to be found with you.—

Why that obstinacy, when you know I can never love you? Do not deceive yourself, my Lord: I tell you, sincerely, I can never love you. Change, my Lord, change—call me unjust, and ungrateful; seek in society a diversion to your love; fly my very steps; see me with horror; hate me, and be no longer a slave to a blind and hopeless passion.—

How cruel your counsel, Lady Carolina! how miserable it makes me!—My heart bleeds at the thought of it—Abuse not the empire my passion has given you over

me—To change!—to hate!—to be restored to my liberty!—How is it possible, when I even delight in my sufferings? Ask not that sacrifice, dear Carolina, or ask my life with it.—Your indifference must subside one day—my pains will melt you into softness—

No, never: depend on it, my Lord.—Tear me from your heart, suppress your passion, and see me no more.—Rob me not of my tranquillity by your declarations, your complaints, and your hopes.—

Lady Preston coming in that minute, I was happily relieved.

Are you not surprised, Victoria, at the infatuation of the man, and his manner of expressing himself?—How shall I keep him from me?—Can love elevate an ordinary

dinary foul, and inspire it with such uncommon fire?—Did he not speak with delicacy, and threaten with fierceness?—His passion begins to terrify me—Dear Victoria, what shall I do? Advise, charming girl, advise—Should he suspect Lord Pelerston—I will not think of it.

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L E T T E R XXVII.

The same to the same.

BE not afraid, Victoria, that your Carolina will turn a coquet. Of all the ridiculous characters which women attempt to assume, that surely is the least adapted to reason, and delicacy of sentiment. Though I treat with so much levity the man I love, accuse me not of a real propensity to be unjust and unsincere.

You do not approve of my reserve to Lord Pelerston: "it may betray him into the belief I am false and ungenerous, or humble him into the certainty, that I have a very slight opinion of his morals and character."

Your ingenuity, Victoria, though admired

mired by me, would do no honour to your discernment, was you living any where but at Brenton-hall. Judging of every heart by your own, you would be exposed to perpetual mistakes. Every hour of the day would bring a new occasion for wonder, and the exclamations, "is it so!—is it possible!" And at last my Victoria, unwilling to disgrace herself by a borrowed air, would return to Cumberland, or fashion her expressions and countenance, were she to stay in London.

Gallantry having stolen the look and garb of love, and chased him from polite circles, every man thinks it inconsistent with manners, and good breeding, not to compliment a Lady with the tender of his heart; and to such perfection is carried the "mimicked sensibility," that

can hardly be distinguished from a real one.

Rank, discretion, and virtue, can not free us from these UNFEELING actors of SENTIMENT; they wait upon us with a tender look, an unwearied attention, and an air of sadness, inseparable from a true passion: but as they only act, the delusion vanishes long before their part is over.

Some there are so flushed with pride and ambition, as to disdain to attack, but where the strongest resistance is to be expected. They feign so admirably, they are such masterly adepts in the art of pleasing, that a young lady, unless guarded by the fear of a mistake, and a firm prepossession against them, might

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might very easily be deceived by the artful inspirers.

Virtue, dear Victoria, virtue would make a very poor defence against a cool and skilful lover, ever watching over his prey, and ready to seize upon the least advantage, which a *raised emotion, an eye swimming with languor, the sudden colouring of a cheek, the unusual panting of a bosom, a faint repulse, or a faltering voice can furnish him with*, had she no suspicion of the tempter's falsehood and perfidy.

How dangerous to believe!—how imprudent not to fly!

The dangers attending ingenuity are too great not to frighten a woman's weak and tender soul; that amiable quality may appear amongst friends, but
must

must always be discarded in the presence of a lover.

Vivacity and carelessness are better arms, and oftener crowned with success. A man, uncertain of the impression he has made, keeps within the limits of decency and respect: the fear of displeasing, sets bounds to his knavish flatteries, and wished-for familiarity: he is a slave, fettered by an indifferent mien, and seeming neglect, when a loving look would, at once, give him both liberty and power over his mistress.

I believe Lord Pelerston has honour and humanity.—What then? Have not all mankind the same character in appearance? Who dares openly to deviate from the air of probity?—Who can see into the inmost recesses of the heart?—

How

How dexterously intriguing—how boldly unprincipled are the generality of our modern lovers! What laws do they not violate for the enjoyment of their criminal desires! What considerations do they not laugh at, and despise?—How many too credulous women—Write no more of ingenuity, Victoria. Keep that phantom at Brenton-hall; raise altars to its honour, and may you never repent of the homage you pay it!

London — 176 —

L E T

L E T T E R XXVIII.

Sir JOHN MODISH to Lord PELHAM.

YOU wonder how I can languish away my days in fruitless sighs, when Pleasure, the generous friend of youth and beauty, would smile on my wound, and heal it, infallibly heal it, in London! Cease to wonder, Frederick—I love.—Let these words, “I love” justify me to thy reason—to thy reason! Canst thou understand the language of my heart, and not call impertinence the charming sallies of nature?—Unhappy man! I pity thee, and scorn thy haughty reason!

Thy

Thy apathy is poison to thy life—thou art in a perpetual death, though thou numberest thy days—Languid as a *modern play*, thy soul has not one flight which I can admire, or extol.

All my senses, enlivened by passion, are lost in the delights of a bewitching error, and thine——To be born!—and not feel!——What malignant spirit cursed thee with that fatal indifference?—Thou art free from the pains of sensibility!——Does that advantage compensate for pleasures thou enjoyest not?

The sight of Lady Victoria, for ten minutes, Frederick—for five minutes only, chases sorrow from my heart, melts me into raptures, and gives life to the tedious hours I pass without her.—When she talks, I interpret her civility into regard, her expression

pression into sentiment, the softness of her voice into love—I argue every motion in my favour; and if I touch her hand, smell the same flower, water her favourite tulip, or sing a song she likes, I laugh at thee, at Frosby, at all the world—I am then wholly wrapt up in happiness and the oblivion of my misery.—Shouldst thou ask what charms such sensations can have, I answer thee *love*, for too faint is the tongue of man to attempt the description of them.

Modish-hall—176—

L E T.

L E T T E R XXIX.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady
VICTORIA NEVIL.

IN spite of all my precautions to avoid
a *tête à tête* with Lord Pelerston, he
seized a critical minute, in which I had
no company but my Canary bird. He
trod so close on the steps of Lucy, that
I had no time to contrive a pretext
for not receiving him.

To be revenged, however, of his too
hasty appearance, I assumed a half-dis-
contented air.—

I see, my Lord, you have attained a
great proficiency in the French manners,
by

by being at once both a visiter, and your own *introduëteur*.——

I shall plead guilty, if love, that made me an intruder, obtains not my pardon from Lady Carolina.——

Don't justify one indiscretion by another, my Lord; the attempt would be ridiculous and vain: am I to forgive, when the excuse adds to the fault?——

'Tis not in me that the fault lies, Madam: I see it in your eyes; 'tis from them it proceeds. Had you less beauty to subdue—less wit to attract, you would not complain of me.—

And 'tis *extempore* you make these pretty compliments, my Lord! 'Tis a pity to lose them upon me, for they are really charming. I beg you will reserve your vivacity, and eloquence, for more important occasions——Are you for the

the court, or the opposition, Lord Peler-
ston?——

How he stared, Victoria, at the un-
expected question!——

I am for neither, my Lady: so long
as we are ruled by the best of princes,
there will be no reason for a difference
of interest.——

What then is meant by an oppo-
sition?——

Very little more than——

But would not the world laugh, were
they to know I am speaking politics
to the amiable Carolina?——How ridi-
culous should I appear!——The happiest
moments of my life consecrated to any
thing else, but Lady Carolina!——And
I am in love!——And I adore you!——

Nobly expressed, upon my word. I
admire your facility and presence of
mind,

mind. How came you by it, my Lord?——

I'll tell you, my Lady.——

He rose up, and taking my hand, led me to a pier-glass.——

How! is it to that glass, my Lord, you are indebted for your amazing sprightliness?——

'Tis not to the glass, but to those features, that shape, those lovely eyes, and that graceful countenance, which you see in yourself.——

Mighty pretty indeed.——Well, I should never have guessed that. Tell me, my Lord, is this gallantry your own, or an importation from the continent? If your own, I beg you will put it in fashion—the manner is so new—Why did not you favour me with it before?——

I

I could almost wish, Madam, I had never been forced to discover it.——

Since you repent, my Lord, the benefit is yours again; take it back, I will forget I ever had it.——

Lady Carolina, cannot you be serious?——

Would you have me serious when you do your utmost to divert me? I am not ungrateful, my Lord; my gaiety is a proper acknowledgment for your efforts to amuse me.——

I have wandered over France, Italy and Spain; I have seen, I have conversed with witty and beautiful women—— never was I tempted to love.——I see Lady Carolina at the play, and my heart, my, till then, faithful heart leaves me, and I am unhappy. O! Carolina, Carolina!——

Do

Do not mind me, my Lord ; go on with your soliloquy.——

How pleasing your chearfulness, Lady Carolina, were I free !—How much more delightful now, if the effect of a mutual, unreserved inclination !——

Of all the men, who do Lady Pelham and me the honour of a visit, none is more entertaining, or more welcome, than Lord Pelerston.——No thanks, my Lord, I am sincere : but I wish you would now and then give your conversation another turn. Raillery, however excellent, ceases to please when we don't know how, and where to drop it.—

Raillery !—Why mistrust my honour ? Is Lady Carolina to be entertained with sentiments she does not inspire ? Are not her rank and virtues a defence against falsehood and gallantry ? Is not her beauty a sure arm against hypocrisy ? Who could tell

her

her of love, and not feel it?—You are absent, charming Carolina—out of a generous pity listen—tell me I may hope——

Yes, my Lord, you may hope—not to displease by discontinuing a discourse I chuse not to hear.——

Was not my reply very heroic, Victoria, when my heart beat so strongly in his favour, that I could hardly dissemble its indiscreet motion? Poor Lord Pelerston! how chagrined and dejected!—A tear started——I saw it.——how dangerous that tear, Victoria! I turned my head, and rising up, went to the window, and trusted to the wind a smothered sigh.——Then resuming my former spirits, I came back to my chair.

Lord

Lord Pelerston seemed lost in thought, but starting as I drew near him—

I should be very sorry, was my passion to give any uneasiness to Lady Carolina.—Forget I spoke—I will speak no more.—You will not forbid me to see you, my Lady?——

I am not such an enemy to my self, my Lord, as to wish to be deprived of your company. My Lady Pelham honours and esteems you.——

Oh! would Carolina but return my love, how happy should I be in Lady Pelham's regard! It were my utmost ambition to be esteemed by her, and Lord Pelham.——

This declaration, Victoria, I thought worthy of a reward, so throwing carelessly my hand between our two chairs, I gave him an opportunity to lay hold of it, and raise it to his mouth.——

Pray,

Pray, my Lord——

Always severe, Carolina!——

Always forgetful, my Lord!——

How I adore you!——

And he fell on his knees.——

By all that is dear to me, I adore you.——

Have you not, just now, given me your word, my Lord.——

I am with You, can I remember it?——

Fearing that my silly heart would at last soften me into attention, I changed the conversation, and kept it on so many different topics, that notwithstanding all his endeavours to get it back on the favourite one, I heard no more of the foolish god of love.

VOL. I.

K

Lord

Lord Pelerston saw well enough he did not displease, and I dare say went home pretty well satisfied that the gay Carolina was not insensible.—I will never encourage a *tête à tête*. An hundred ideas, which disturb us not in company, crowd into our heads when alone with a lover, and may reverse the firmest resolution. The necessity of giving a lie to one's heart, is a constraint not to be endured. Add to it the indiscreet attention, and the yet more indiscreet sighs, troubles, and agitations, of a man we love—That Lucy, how I will scold her!

London 176—

L E T.

L E T T E R X X X .

Sir JOHN MODISH to Lord PELHAM.

W H E N thou speakest, Frederick,
 in the house, I admire thee:—
 when, in the benevolence of thy heart,
 thou helpest the friendless man of honour,
 I commend thee: but when thy pen writes
 of love, as thou art then no longer my
 sensible Frederick, I heartily laugh at
 the shadow thou offereſt me of thyself.
 Thou art in *love* what Alexander was in
painting—a mere dunce to be ridiculed
 by a feeling boy of fifteen.

Thou wouldſt have me, ſince I chuſe
 not to leave Cumberland, ſpirit away
 my paſſion for Victoria, with the lively
 Miſs Elliſon.—Wilt thou never remem-
 ber that I love, and that a great beauty

without as great virtues, cannot affect my heart?—The hand of Miss Ellison I wish not—her ruin I will not attempt.—I shan't have the ill-nature to impose a sigh, a fond expression upon her.—I abhor the fashionable sport of undoing virtuous maids—curse on him who betrays them into infamy.—

Court not, sayest thou, court not Lady Belmour, for 'tis a most villanous sin to succeed a fool in the arms of a lady.—Thou art surely a wondrous delicate fellow, Frederick: was this law of thine strictly observed by mankind, women would not thank thee for having established it.

Lord Belmour is a fool, 'tis true; but do'st thou know what a tempting creature his lady is? Do'st thou know, she is all youth, charms, and sensibility; and would smile thee, even thee, Frederick,

derick, into fierce desires? Do'st thou know she is the life of Cumberland, and that I would question my passion for Victoria, were I not dead to the seduction of her smiles? She only could rival Victoria—she does not—Frederick, keep to thy indifference, but let me love. Adieu.

LETTER XXXI.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady VICTORIA NEVIL.

I Will write to you, Victoria, with my usual sincerity : expect no mercy from me when thy head rules thy heart, or this takes a flight from the former. Thou hast been by turns, these few days, the slave of each, but though it flatters my pride to find my Victoria is not faultless, I will furnish thee with an antidote against it.

Passions have their degrees, let fools say what they will, unless we are totally deprived of the faculty of reasoning,
by

by sleep, stupidity, or madness. Love and hatred rise, by slow progressions, to the summit of infatuation, and either of these passions may be rooted from our hearts, when reason is warned of their existence by feeling and reflection.

Let a sentiment be ever so pleasing, it is hourly contradicted by pride, or self-interest, which constantly point to us disgrace and sorrow, the natural effects of a false step, and a blind prepossession. To say that these misfortunes are not inherent to every sentiment, and that mutual love is exempt from them, is to contradict experience. This proves that we are formed of contradictions; that no passion whatever keeps long in its meridian; and that it is both possible, and probable, we are often deluded by not strictly searching our hearts, and granting too

much to nature, and not enough to reason.

I know how agreeable it is to be deceived. Delusion is the life of a sensible lover; it takes up his time, his thoughts, and its charms, almost realised by imagination, are always welcome to his raptured heart. Hence the many oversights and the erroneous credulity which lead to disappointment and regret.

Human wisdom, Victoria, has seldom checked sentiment than submitted to it: 'tis our fate to be some times lulled by nature into a forgetfulness of the means which essentially tend to our own happiness. When reason is thrown into confusion by the tumultuous spirits forcing their way to the head, to fill it only with the idea of a favourite bliss, it helps not
to

to extinguish the fermenting fire, and deliver the soul from the violent gales of a tempestuous passion.

Happiness is not to be attained by giving a loose to prejudice. Let us not endeavour to enhance the value of a sensation, and add to our security by a false esteem of the objects before us, lest we should find the reality fall short of our sanguine expectation, and be forced into a contempt of ourselves.

The pleasure of being beloved, is the highest a mortal can enjoy: but as it is not at all times to be secured, through the inconstancy ingrafted in our tempers, I wish we could feel it moderately, that we might not be involved in the affliction following an irreparable loss. In possessing we should be ever ready to be deprived,

and prepare against making ourselves miserable for what is not to be retrieved.

2 o'Clock.

Thou, my Victoria, thou surely feelest that these reflections are truly adapted to thy own situation, and that I have set in their true light the dangers impending on thy passion for Frosby.

Soothed in the calm of a full assurance of his love, you will not lose one thought about his indiscretion; and though he be unjust and unreasonable, he must have no failings, since their principle is his tenderness for you. Unsuspecting girl! You frighten me. Your candour and ingenuity, will lead you into an imprudent tranquillity

tranquillity of mind, from which if one day forced to arouse, it will be to pass immediately to the most exquisite confusion and anxiety. You will despise and hate yourself for having trusted so much to your heart, and the seeming good qualities of your lover.

No body would have mankind more perfect than I: but as it is not in my power to adorn every individual with my Victoria's virtues, why should she be a victim to her generosity? See men as they are, not as you wish them to be, and dare to examine the heart of Frosby.

Consider, Victoria, how naturally men slight what comes with ease, that the difficulties of pleasing make them languish
in

in unspeakable desires. They delight in obstacles, and to remain in suspense.— I tell thee, art and indifference will command their adoration, whilst ingenuity and tenderness are shunned and uncourted. It is a foible we inherit from nature, and Frosby has it in his heart as much as any man in the creation.

Sir John Modish's remark, that he would reckon it a prodigy were you both as deeply in love now as you were some years ago, is not so absurd. How can we answer we shall be neither unjust nor ungrateful?—

You make love, Victoria, the study of every day, the business of every hour, when it should only be a diversion: you exert your utmost sensibility to embellish it with the gayest colours, and never once reflect it is the work of your imagination. Awake not, sweet girl, from the
the

the agreeable dream : continue in the loving fit : be for ever lost to every other idea than that of being beloved.

5 o'Clock.

Does love, once settled in the heart, grow too powerful for restraint? Can it not be erased without tearing a part of it? Are we unable to overcome, and are the efforts of reason vain? No, Victoria, they are not vain, though attended with mighty difficulties. What are we to aim at but our own felicity? Shall we be satisfied with the shadow, when we can attain the reality? What is an hour of rapturous delusion to years of happiness? Are we not strengthened by this consideration, and enabled to triumph, and dispel the cloud which intercepts the light, and obscures our understanding?—

To

To love, and to be always loved ! fine talk, indeed ! Set that apart, Victoria, for your dreaming minutes, but let it not be listened to, when awake : never flatter yourself that Frosby has no fault, because he appears to your fascinated eyes to have none. He has his share of weakness and depravity inseparable from humanity. Trust not, Victoria, to the outward form of a man.—I am displeased at Frosby's proceedings : they seem too strongly tainted with injustice and tyranny. Be emboldened to judge his behaviour, and the charm that surrounds thee will dissolve. Love him more and more, if he deserves thee, but hate him in proportion as he may have deceived thee.

Courage, dear girl, shake off the yoke of prepossession, and let Carolina no longer

longer reproach thee with a single failing. I hate Frosby for having made me discover one : yes, thy partiality for him is one, and a very great one.—Poor Sir John !—so partial an observer against him !—Indeed thou deservest not the love he has for thee. Adieu.

London—176—

L E T.

L E T T E R XXXII.

Lady VICTORIA NEVIL to Lady
CAROLINA PELHAM.

CRUEL friend ! Severe Carolina !
Spare thy reflections so long as my
heart is pleased in being deceived.——
Why do'st thou force thy reason on Vic-
toria—on Victoria, unwilling to listen to
thee ?

Too few are the days of happiness——
too many the days of misery.——Let me
then, Carolina, let me enjoy the flattering
illusion—let me be deaf to reason, that
mortal enemy to love and imagination.

To think ! to doubt ! to compare ! Were
it not a folly to put to that test the plea-
fures

fures of love—pleasures which annihilate every other sensation, and entertain the soul with perpetual raptures? Felicity is to be felt, not described—it is lost when we think.—Carolina! never say that Frosby may possibly prove unworthy of me.—He loves—he has no fault when he talks of love—my memory is then dead to all past injuries.—If he offends, I rave myself into hatred of the man—if I see sorrow in his looks, he no longer is guilty—I sigh and love again.

Brenton-hall—176—

L E T.

LETTER XXXIII.

Lady CAROLINA PELHAM to Lady
VICTORIA NEVIL.

HE came, Victoria! he came with conquest in his looks! he fluttered, smiled, and courted, and it was not Carolina, who animated his soul, enlivened his eyes, and graced his countenance!—Will you believe it? but why would you not? Is there any other event but Frosby's ingratitude that could surprise, and render you incredulous? Yes, yes: you will believe the wounds I give are not incurable, and that I may lose the slaves my charms
have

have fettered—you will, Victoria? And you dread not my displeasure! You will dare to humble my pride—a woman's pride——her darling passion! How presuming!——Can friendship be so truly disinterested as to forgive when one's beauty, and power are called in question! Lose a conquest!——and I shall be told it is possible!——Such a conquest!——Have a care, Victoria.

“Who is the audacious mortal who has fled from my Carolina? Lord Pelerston?”

No.

“Lord Fanfly?”

Yes: he himself is the run-away slave: he who was to “turn frantic, to despair at every frown of the charming

charming Carolina," has forsaken her, and basked in another's smiles.

It was not enough for him to have mortified me by an unexpected desertion, he yesterday paid his devoirs to a young, beautiful widow, the idol of the court, and glory of the age. I had the dismal sight of his attention to her, at Lady Preston's.——

Lord Fanfly had the most sanguine hopes, for he out-did himself in being less than usually tedious and impertinent. He seldom trusted himself out of a monosyllable, and his great and affecting eloquence was all in assiduity, a dying look, and a perpetual smile of approbation. He played a few rubbers with Lady Walgrave, and sat next to her at supper. Had the

man

man made choice of a less accomplished lady in his ambitious attempt to interest my vanity, I should have rejoiced at his seeming inconstancy: but by his applying to Lady Walgrave, I lost all hopes of being delivered from him.

Lady Walgrave is the scourge of fools, and her company the best chosen in London. I never saw wit more happily united with beauty, candour play with a better grace than in her lovely eye. How could Lord Fansly flatter himself with Lady Walgrave's countenance to raise my jealousy? Would she condescend to feign a pleasure which she feels not? how foolish his plot when he imagined I should regret him! I laughed at his uncommon presumption, though heartily vexed he had not singled out a lady, who, prompted by

by interest, or the honour of a title, would have endeavoured to free me by securing him to herself. The man must be naturally formed to be wrong with the best intention of being right, since, even in his revenge, he has not the art of chusing a proper and infallible weapon.

A letter—from Lord Fanfly—Is not a pen in the hands of a fool a satire upon reason, Victoria?—What can he write?—Would it were his letter of *congé*!——I'll see.

TO Lady CAROLINA PELHAM.

In vain have I searched this fortnight for a beauty I could love—A heart which has once surrendered to Lady Carolina, has no feelings for another—she alone can
charm,

charm, enliven tedious uniformity, and smile away the troubles of a domestic life. How hard my fate!—Dear Carolina, will you still continue insensible—still deaf to my sufferings?—I will adore you with unremitting constancy—I will love with such fervour, that you shall not have one minute to think on an indifferent object—you shall hear but of love—of your beauty—of my transports.—My fancy will wander but to divert and please you. Delay not my happiness, oh thou my Carolina——say but thou wilt not hate—and I am at thy feet—at thy feet swearing eternal love——Oh, Carolina! my heart will be in an agony till thou condescendest to write I am no longer indifferent to thee.—Say but the word, and I am happy.

FANFLY.

Is

Is not this a pretty billet, Victoria ?—
 written by Lord Fanfly ! I am amazed—
 How came he by the lively expression ?—
 Certainly there must be two souls in that
 man—he talks—he writes—a won-
 drous reverse this—his tongue gave me a
 dislike to love—his pen—Lord Peler-
 lerston is coming—I hear him—away with
 Fanfly. Adieu.



END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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